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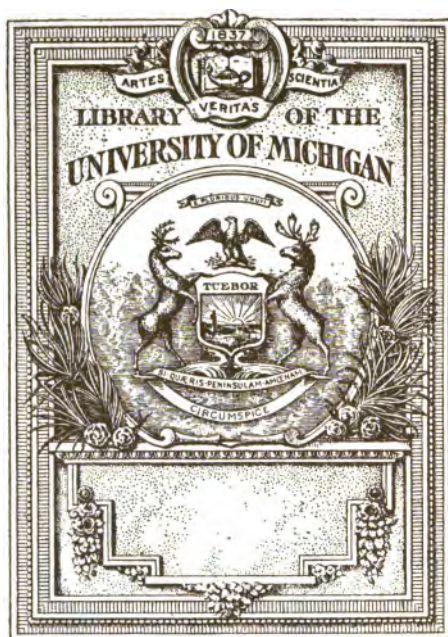
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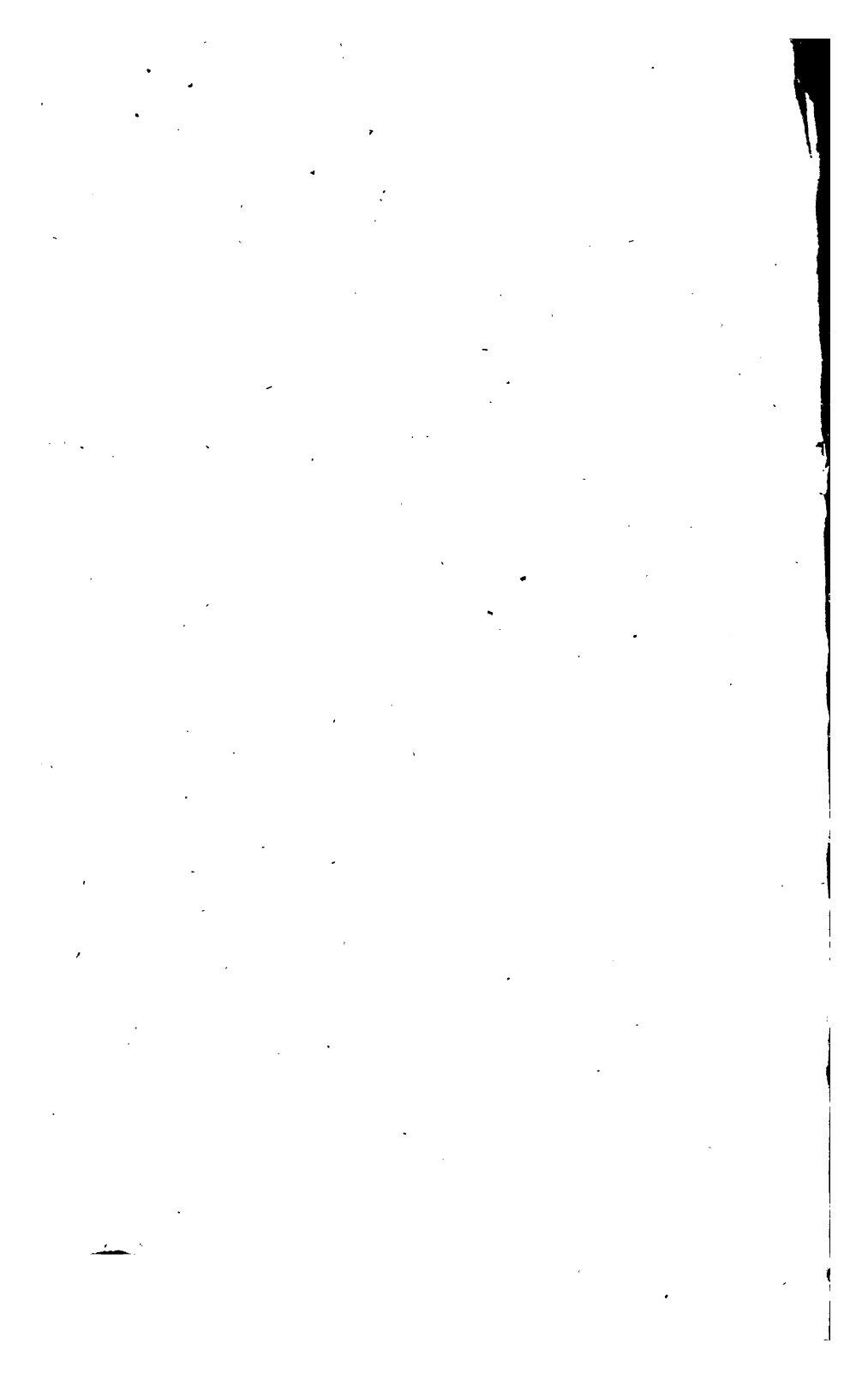


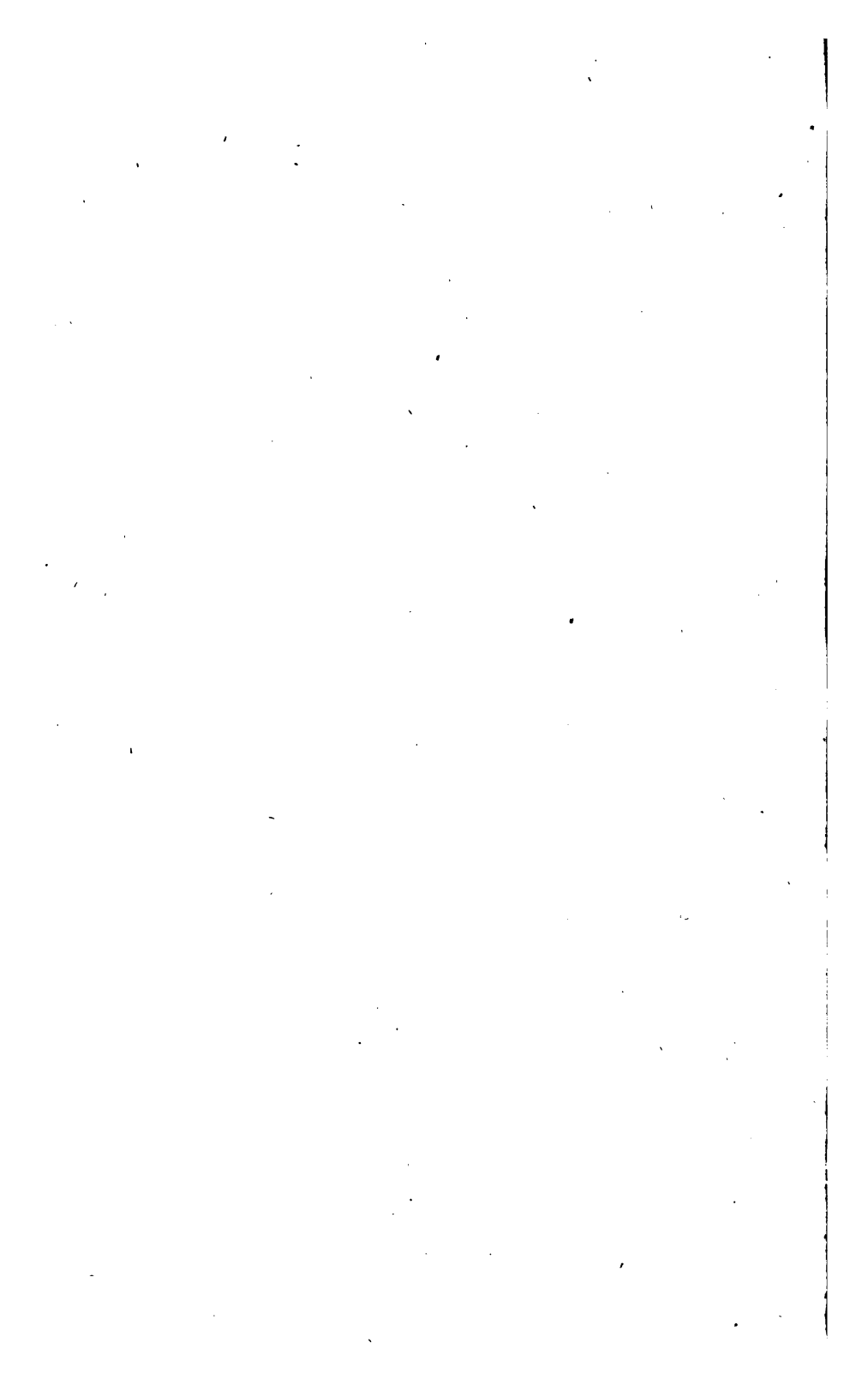
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THE
HISTORY
OF THE
ARABIANS,
Under the GOVERNMENT of the
CALIPHS.

THE
HISTORY
OF THE
ARABIANS,

Under the GOVERNMENT of the

CALIPHS,

FROM
MAHOMET, their FOUNDER,
TO THE
Death of MOSTAZEM, the fifty-sixth and
last Abassian CALIPH;

Containing the Space of Six Hundred Thirty-six Years.

With NOTES, Historical, Critical, and Explanatory :

Together with

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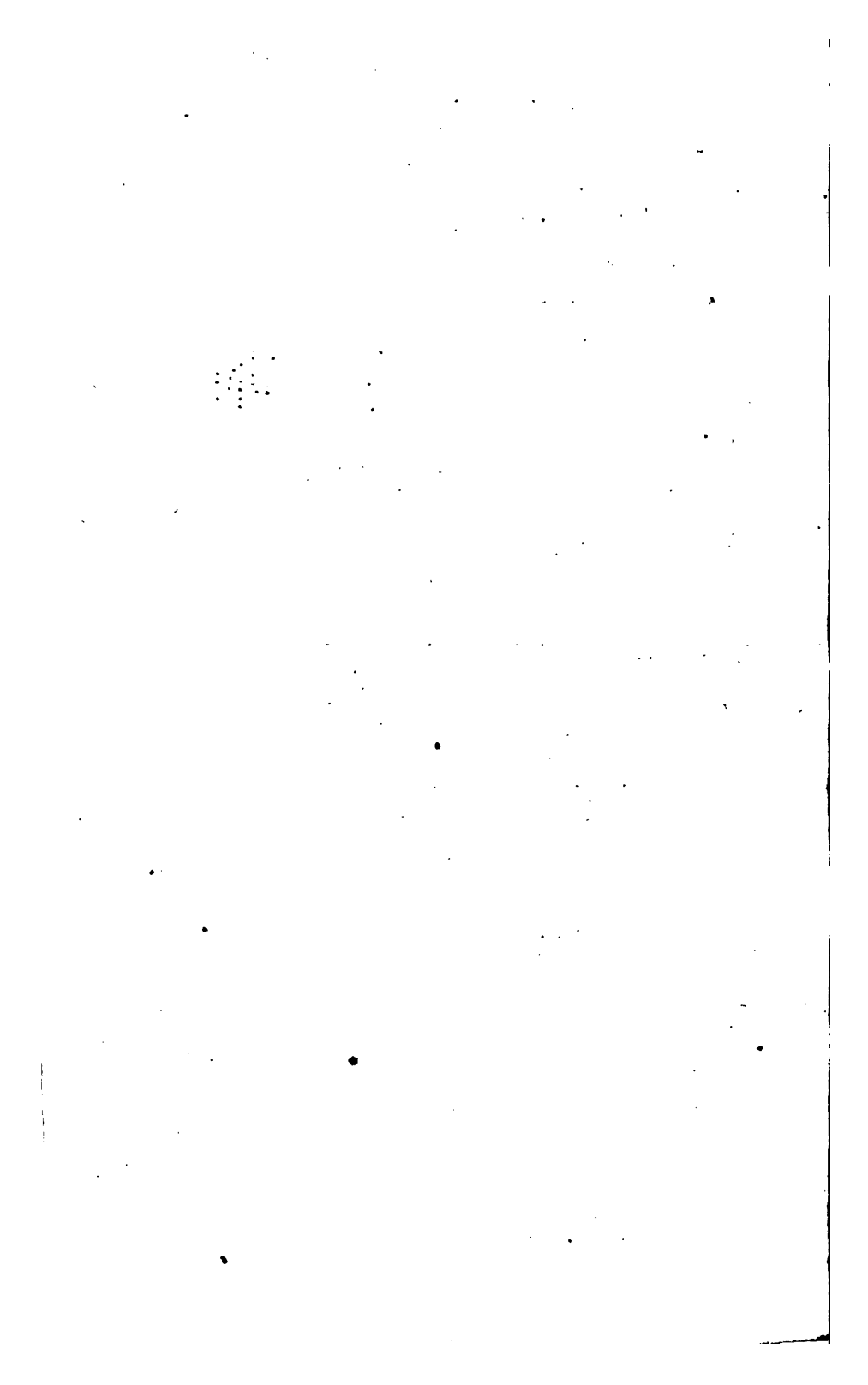
BY THE
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Translated from the FRENCH,
With ADDITIONAL NOTES.

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THE
H I S T O R Y
OF THE
A R A B I A N S,
Under the GOVERNMENT of the
C A L I P H S.

A L I.

The FOURTH CALIPH.

HITHERTO the Arabians have appeared to be solely intent on making conquests, and propagating and establishing their enthusiastic tenets by force of arms, through the whole extent of their dominions: But during the reign of the present Caliph, the scene will appear to be totally changed.

Ali.
Hegyra. 35.
Ch.ær. 655.

Though the Arabians were unanimous in professing the same religion, yet its influence was not so great as to prevent them from falling into feuds and animosities, and even from breaking out into open revolts: The flame of sedition was first lighted during the administration of the unfortunate Othman,

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and

ALI.
Hegyra 35.
Ch. 2r. 655.

and the disturbances increased in the time of his successor. The Mussulmen pointed the sword at their own breasts : and thence arose a schism which being strengthened by time, still subsists among the followers of Mahomet.

Such intestine divisions might have intirely overthrown their weak and infant empire : but that mighty hand which at his pleasure dispenses crowns and kingdoms, protected that people in his wrath, and made them his instruments for punishing the shameful lives of the Greeks, and the wicked behaviour of the Christians.

Ali nominated Caliph with great acclamations.

The very day of Othman's death, the whole city of Medina concurred in the choice of his successor. They did not give themselves time to deliberate, but nominated Ali with the loudest acclamations.

As this illustrious Mussulman had formerly sought that dignity with the greatest eagerness, it might have been reasonably concluded he would have accepted it with the utmost pleasure ; and yet when the deputies came to notify his election to him, he started many difficulties, declared he was not disposed to take charge of the Caliphate, and that he would rather serve in the capacity of a vizir, if he might be appointed to that office.

Upon this the deputies became more earnest in their intreaties, and expressed the sense and desires of the whole nation in such strong terms, that at last Ali promised to comply ; upon condition, however, that he should be appointed

appointed in a full assembly of the electors; for he said that they alone were invested with the right of chusing a Caliph, and that any other kind of election would be unconstitutional.

ALI.
Hegyra 35.
Ch. æt. 655.

It was no more than prudence in Ali to observe all necessary formalities on that important occasion; since he would thereby prevent his enemies from disputing his election; which they would certainly have controverted had it been in any respect defective.

At this time there was a very strong party against Ali; among whom were Aïsha Mahomet's favourite wife, Tellah, and Zobeir. These were all his irreconcilable and implacable enemies, and in particular Aïsha, to whom he had done an ill office, which women never forgive*: and indeed she always shewed the most inveterate hatred to him;

* Aïsha, though the best beloved, was not the most constant and faithful of Mahomet's wives. She was publicly called in question for being guilty of adultery. Ali was so imprudent as to intermeddle in the affair and even to give evidence against her. Though Mahomet had sufficient cause to think her guilty, he wisely concealed his sentiments, and declared he thought the accusation was mere calumny; nay he even went farther, he proved it by a revelation which came very opportunely in about a month afterwards to clear up his doubts. It is contained at length in the 24th chapter of the Alcoran, intitled light, on account of the elucidation it gives in so nice an affair.— See also the translation of the Koran by Sale, fol. 288-9, where the story that gave rise to this accusation is inserted at large: but it does not thereby appear that Ali had the least concern either in the accusation or prosecution; on the contrary, the charge is attributed to other persons who are there expressly named.

ALI.
Hegyra 35.
Ch. ær. 655.

and when a Caliph was to be elected, she had so managed as to get him excluded.

Had Ali been opposed by no other enemy than Aïsha, he would have been hard put to it to secure himself from her intrigues and resentment : but Tellah and Zobeir, men of eminence among the Mussulmen, formed pretensions to the Caliphate and were supported by a pretty numerous party. A third pretender had also entered the lists, even in the life-time of the former Caliph, who had some hopes of succeeding, or at least of raising great disturbances, if they should refuse to elect him. It was the famous Moawiyah governor of Syria, who from the importance of his post, and by means of his immense treasures, might have occasioned the greatest troubles if they had given him cause of discontent.

Ali, who perfectly well knew the spirit and power of each of his opponents, was persuaded he should be capable of making head against them, if he could attain the throne ; but he refused to ascend it by any other than the usual means, that he might obviate all pretences for disputing his election.

This reason induced him to require that the electors should assemble and proceed according to law. And they met accordingly. Tellah and Zobeir appeared as electors, and concurred with the rest in choosing Ali. Though they were his competitors, the unanimity of votes prevented them from shewing their discontent ; besides, as Ali's party was the strongest
in

in Medina, they feared lest the inhabitants of that city should have punished them for their opposition, before their friends could have been able to assist them.

ALI.

Hegyra. 35.
Ch. ær. 655.

So soon as the election was over, the principal men of Medina came to Ali's house, and there offered to take the oath of fealty to him; but the new Caliph declined accepting of their allegiance in private, and desired that a ceremony of so much importance as the paying of homage, might be performed in open mosque, and in a full assembly of the people.

On the day appointed for that solemnity, Ali went in the morning to the mosque, cloathed in a gown of thin cotton, a coarse turban upon his head, his slippers in one hand, and a bow in the other instead of a walking stick. The Mussulmen came in crowds to do homage to their new sovereign; but Ali observing, before the ceremony began, that Telah and Zobeir were not present, sent and desired they would come thither.

Upon their arrival Ali asked them if they disapproved of his election, or whether they honestly meant to take the oath of allegiance to him, for, he added, that if they had any objections to make, he was so far from being fond of the new dignity then offered him, that he would instantly decline it, and take the oath to either of them that would accept the government.

They both refused it, and assured the Caliph that far from being desirous of enjoying

ALI. his post, they would do all that lay in their
 Hegyra. 35. power to make him easy in the possession of
 Ch. ær. 655. it, by swearing with the greatest sincerity and
 submission, to observe the duty which subjects
 owe to their sovereign.

The whole assembly, and Ali in particular, knew what little credit was to be given to the protestations of those two Mussulmen, but no person expressed his distrust, and they proceeded to taking the oath.

At the very time the ceremony was performing, some person present openly made a smart observation, which plainly shewed what opinion they entertained of Tellah's fair promises. It is necessary to be observed that it was a custom among the Arabians for the vassal to give his right hand to the sovereign in token of homage. Tellah's right arm having been shortened by some wounds he had received in battle, when he came to offer it to Ali, he could not reach so far as the others; which occasioned one of the by-standers to say, that it was a bad sign, and like to prove but a lame kind of business that was begun with a lame hand. How far this presage was fulfilled, will appear from the sequel of Ali's history.

Tellah and Zobeir now joined together, and resolved on the Caliph's destruction; but before they proceeded to open force, they strove to draw him into some snare, and endeavoured to deprive him of his dependants,
 and

and such as seemed the most firmly attached to him.

ALI.
Hegyra 35.
Ch. x. 655.
Tellah and Zobeir persuade Ali to avenge the death of Othman.

In a short time after he had taken possession of the sovereign authority, they came to him, repeated their promises of obedience, and made him fresh offers of their service. After these general propositions, they entered into the particulars of what they thought necessary to be done in order to gain the hearts of the people. Amongst other things they insinuated that he ought to revenge the death of Othman, and they offered to assist him with the greatest zeal in that undertaking, wherein, they said, the honour and dignity of his post was nearly concerned.

What answer soever Ali should give to their proposal, they expected it would equally tend to his destruction. If he had refused, the public would have been confirmed in the suspicions which had been artfully propagated that he had a considerable share in the assassination of the Caliph. On the other hand, had he consented to punish the murderers and their accomplices, he would have incurred the hatred of all Othman's enemies, who were very numerous and powerful, and who, in order to avoid a prosecution, might take such steps as would be highly prejudicial to him.

But Ali artfully eluded the difficulty. He Ali's answer. shewed a great inclination to punish Othman's assassins; spoke of their conspiracy as the blackest attempt, and that it ought to be rigorously punished; but he at the same time

ALI. represented to them how impracticable it
 Hegyra 35. would be, considering the great number of
 Ch. xi. 655. the malecontents, who had all approved of
 the assassination, and even advised it; that if
 he punished those who had dared to lift up
 their guilty hands against Othman, he must
 also of necessity inflict a most severe punish-
 ment on all the accomplices: which would
 not fail of exciting great disturbances, and
 perhaps even a civil war, which might end in
 the ruin of the state.

He added, however, that if they could point
 out to him those who had actually struck Oth-
 man the fatal blows, or would undertake to
 find them out, he would not be wanting on
 his part, and would take care to punish the
 guilty.

As Tellah and Zobeir were unwilling to be
 personally engaged in so important a matter;
 they no longer insisted on their proposal; and
 departed, in all appearance, satisfied with the
 Caliph's prudent conduct; but in fact not a
 little disconcerted that he had escaped the snare
 laid for him.

The conduct of Ali, in striving at the be-
 gining of his reign to gain the affections of the
 people, and avoid every cause of disturbance,
 especially at a time when all the members of
 the state seemed but too much inclined to take
 violent measures, was most prudent. And
 had he afterwards behaved with the same cau-
 tion and wisdom as he shewed in his answer
 relating to Othman's assassination, he might
 have

have reasonably hoped for success; but he soon changed his conduct: and that Caliph who was seemingly so circumspect in all his actions which might win the good will of his subjects, in the sequel took those very steps which unavoidably brought on a civil war.

ALI.
Hegyra 35.
Ch. ær. 655.

He resolved to take away the governments of provinces from all those persons that had been appointed by his predecessor. On this design he conferred with Al-Mogeirah-ebn-Said, one of the chief men amongst the Arabians, who with great warmth represented to him that the project would end in his destruction; he earnestly intreated him not to be over hasty in an affair of such importance, and to wait at least till he was more firmly established in his government.

Ali resolves
to displace
the governors
of provinces.

This advice did not please Ali, however he did not issue his orders so soon as he at first intended to have done. The next day Al-Mogeirah made him another visit, and the same matter having been again brought on the tapis, Ali shewed that he had still the same object in view, and he gave Al-Mogeirah to understand that he proposed shortly to put it in execution.

That Mussulman who had so earnestly dissuaded the Caliph from taking a step which in its consequences might be fatal to the state, and to Ali in particular, on a sudden changed his mind, and told him, that having maturely considered what had passed in their last conversation, he thought it would be best for Ali to proceed

Ali.
Hegyra 35.
Ch. ar. 655.

proceed according to his own proposal; for by putting in places of trust persons he could rely on, he would doubtless firmly establish his authority, and cause it to be duly revered in all the provinces of the mussulman empire.

In the midst of this conference Abdollah-ebn-Abbas chanced to come in, and Al-Mogeirah departing to leave them together, Ali acquainted Abdollah with his design to change the governors, and at the same time told him, that Al-Mogeirah had at first strongly opposed it; but that he had now altered his opinion, which was the cause of the visit he had just paid him.

Abdollah, amazed to find that the Caliph was insensible of the dangerous snare that Mussulman had laid for him, told Ali, he ought to weigh his scheme well before he put it in execution; that the first advice Al-Mogeirah had given him was good, and worthy a zealous citizen who had the tranquillity of the state, as well as of his sovereign at heart; but the last was the council of a traytor, who probably had some interest in raising disturbances in his country.

He added, that it was his opinion no changes should be made; and as he knew the Caliph had particularly in his eye Moawiyah, governor of Syria, he insisted on his being continued in his government; for as that Mussulman had a very strong party there, the dismissing him might occasion a general rising of the

the people in his favour, and occasion the loss of that province.

ALI.

Hegyra 35.
Ch. ar. 655.

Abdollah then told Ali that no trust was to be reposed in Tellah or Zobeir, for it was manifest they had traitorous designs, and he was sure if any insurrection should happen they would be the first to appear in arms against him; wherefore he advised him to continue Moawiyah in his post till he was certain whether or not he would submit to his authority, "and then, says he, leave it to me to bring him from his house neck and heels, which I will do when ever you desire it."

These sage remonstrances had no effect on the obstinate Ali, who being bent on the execution of his purpose, imprudently dismissed all the governors, and by so extraordinary a change raised deadly feuds in the state, which caused him the greatest uneasiness during his whole reign.

Hegyra 36.
Ch. ar. 656.

The new officers he sent out to the respective provinces were Othman-ebn-Hanif, who was ordered to Bassorah; Ammárah-ebn-Sahál to Cufah; Abdollah-ebn-Abbas to Arabia Féliz; Sahel-ebn-Hanif to Syria; and Saad-ebn-Kais to Egypt.

Of all these governors only one was permitted to take possession of his post; and if some others entered on their government it was not effected without the greatest opposition. Amongst others, Sahel going to Syria, was stopped by a party of horse at Tabúk. The commandant knowing he had been appointed

ALI.
Hegyra 36.
Ch. 27. 636.

pointed governor of Syria, so plainly declared to him how the people of that province stood affected, that he did not think proper to proceed any further. He was told that if any besides Othman had sent him, he might go about his business. Sahel did not chuse to dispute the matter and forthwith returned to Medina.

Kais went into Egypt, where he was opposed by a party of the Othmanians, who refused to submit to Ali's government, till justice was done on the murderers of Othman. The inhabitants of Bassorah and Cufah, bestowed the like kind of treatment on their new governors, and would not even suffer them to enter their territories.

Abodllah established himself in Yaman, and was the only officer that succeeded; but this was attended with no very advantageous consequences; for Yali, who was governor there, by virtue of a commission from Othman, carried off all the money that was in the treasury, and hastening to Mecca delivered the treasure to Aïefha, Tellah and Zobeir.

Ali refuses to
give to Tellah
and Zobeir
the govern-
ments they sue
for.

The two latter retired from the Caliph's court, on his refusal to employ them at the time he appointed new governors. The one of them sued for the government of Cufah, the other for that of Bassorah (both which were places of very great importance). Ali who knew them too well to put any trust in them, gave them a denial softened by a complement, he told them that he had no
body

body about him of so great capacity as they, or with whom he could so properly consult in such emergencies as a new established government was likely to be exposed to. He added, that their abode at court should not be so much lost time to them, and that he would take an opportunity of rewarding them in proportion to their merit and services.

ALI.

Hegyra 36.
Ch. ar. 656.

Ali's promises produced no great effect upon the two Mussulmen. They plainly saw that the Caliph's design was to keep them near him, that he might be a witness to their conduct, and perhaps with a view to make them responsible for such disturbances as might arise at Medina. However, for a time they concealed their sentiments; and so soon as they heard that Aïesha was gone to Mecca, they asked leave to go thither, on pretence of performing the pilgrimage, which was granted. And there, in concert with the prophet's widow, they raised a formidable party, which the Caliph vainly endeavoured to quell. The money which the governor of Yaman had brought them was of singular use in keeping up a correspondence, and gaining friends in all parts, and so artfully did they conduct their plot, that in a short time all Syria broke out into open revolt.

Amongst others they stirred up the Motalites, that is to say the Seperatists; (by which appellation such as disputed Ali's election were distinguished.) And they having

They raise a
revolt against
Ali.

by.

Ali.
Hegyra 36.
Ch. ar. 656.

by means of their emissaries procured the body of Othman to be taken out of the grave, and got possession of the bloody shirt which he wore when he was assassinated, they made a very advantageous use of it, sometimes it was spread on the pulpit of the mosques, when the people assembled there; and sometimes it was carried in the army as a banner during their march thro' the chief cities of Syria.

This bloody spectacle, daily exposed to open view, had a stronger effect than the most pathetic speeches. The Syrians, who were greatly indebted to Othman's munificence, in a fury took up arms to revenge the death of their benefactor; and only waited till the victim that was to be sacrificed to his memory should be pointed out to them.

Ali applies to
Moawiyah to
acknowledge
him as Caliph.

Ali having received information of the transactions in that province, wrote to Moawiyah in very mild terms. Without mentioning the feuds he had raised in Syria, he only exhorted him to give a proof of obedience, by acknowledging him for Caliph, which he hoped he would the more readily resolve to do, as no illegal means had been used in his election, and as he had been chosen by the unanimous votes of the electors.

Moawiyah, who well knew how Ali was disposed towards him, was unmoved at his letter; he attributed the Caliph's moderation to his want of power; and to shew him how slightly he regarded his remonstrances, instead of returning him an answer, he insulted him
in

In the grossest manner. About three months after Othman's death, he called a messenger to whom he delivered a packet sealed up, and directed thus: "Moawiyah to Ali." Then giving him private instructions, he sent him to Medina, together with Ali's messenger, whom he had detained till that time. According to his orders, he entered Medina in the evening, a time when in that hot climate the streets are the most frequented, for the sake of enjoying the cool air.

ALI.

Hegyra 36.
Ch. ar. 656.

When the courier entered the city, he carried the packet on the top of a staff, to inform the inhabitants that the governor of Syria had written to the Caliph. The arrival of that courier gave great pleasure to all such as were desirous of peace; they concluded he was ordered to make such a shew of the letter; and supposed it might contain some terms for an accomodation, which might put an end to all misunderstanding between the Caliph and Moawiyah.

The people therefore immediately thronged after him to know the contents of his message. Ali, on his part, was also very desirous of coming to terms with Moawiyah, and especially at a juncture when the flame of revolt was spreading with the greatest violence; but when he opened the letter he was greatly amazed to find it was only a blank paper, not so much as a word being written in it; which he rightly judged to be a token of the utmost defiance

ALI.
Hegyra 36.
Ch. xx. 656.

defiance and contempt, which called for a speedy vengeance.

However, the Caliph had so much the mastery of his passions, as to shew no great change in his countenance; he even discoursed with the courier, and asked him what news in Syria. The messenger answered, that there were sixty thousand men in arms, who only waited for orders to begin their march. He added, that the first appearance of the insurrection was at Damascus, where they had set up Othman's bloody shirt as a standard, over the pulpit in the open mosque.

Ali, unable to contain himself at this relation, answered with great emotion, "Do they require the blood of Othman at my hands? I call God to witness I am not guilty of it, and hope he will assist me."

After so plain an information, a war in Syria was unavoidable. But whilst he was endeavouring to guard against a distant enemy, a party was formed even in Arabia, which was by so much the more formidable, as the famous Aïsha, the Caliph's inveterate enemy, was at the head of it. She was the main spring, and as it were, the soul of that conspiracy against Ali, and at her house the conspirators assembled to debate on such measures as were proper to be taken for securing the success of their plot. And there appeared, either personally or by deputies, the whole house of Ommiyah, who all concurred in
the

the design of revenging the death of Othman, who was one of their family.

ALI.
Hegyra 36.
Ch. ær. 656.

As to the Ommiyans they seemed to have some pretence to punish the Caliph for the death of their kinsman : they sincerely thought that Ali was the perpetrator of it ; and no pains had been spared to confirm them in that belief. But in respect to Aïsha, Tellah, and Zobeir, who headed the conspiracy, their conduct in that juncture, was an effect of the basest treachery.

If we may rely on the testimony of Ebn Athir, an arabian writer, Aïsha and her two associates were the real contrivers of, or at least accomplices in Othman's assassination. They alone deserved to have received the punishment due to so heinous a crime ; but by an uncommon stretch of wickedness they contrived to throw the whole blame on Ali, that they might more surely destroy him. Such was the virtuous Aïsha, so highly boasted of by her countrymen, and so well known in the mussulman history, by the title of the " mother of the faithful " which might surely have given her a dispensation from appearing as an accuser of any of her children, even though they had been signally culpable ; but it was certainly a most infamous piece of treachery first to commit a crime, and then to charge it upon another person, upon her sovereign, and if I may so express myself, upon the whole state, which was thereby exposed

ALI. to suffer all the ill consequences of furious
 Hegyra 36. and intestine divisions.
 Ch. ær. 656.

Different
 schemes for a revolt. Their revolt having been agreed upon, nothing remained but to fix on proper measures for carrying it into execution; to which end conferences were held at the house of Aiesha. That vindictive woman proposed they should forthwith march to Medina. She was for taking away the malady root and branch. Some others were of opinion that they ought to march into Syria, to join the numerous army which Moawiyah had raised in that province.

These different opinions having been fully debated and maturely weighed, it was not thought proper to follow either of them. It was observed that almost all the inhabitants of Medina sided with the Caliph, and to fall on him there; would be attacking him in his strongest part. As to the march into Syria, it was said, that as Moawiyah was strong enough to maintain the possession of his government, they might safely leave to him the defence of that province.

As the party did not come into either of these measures, a third was proposed; namely, to begin their operations of war in those parts where they might have the greatest prospect of success, and forthwith to seize some strong places. Tellah, who was at the meeting, proposed an expedition to Basorah, which he was of opinion they might easily become masters of, he having a good interest in that city.

city. This scheme was approved of, and the confederates were forthwith informed of it by proclamations made in the streets of Mecca, and by a circular letter, couched in the following terms.

A. 1. 1.
Hegyra 36.
Ch. ar. 656.

“ The mother of the faithful, Tellah, and Zobeir are going in person to Basorah. Whosoever therefore is desirous of defending his religion, and fighting voluntarily to revenge the death of Othman, let him come, and if he has not the necessary conveniences for the journey, they shall be provided for him.”

They assemble their troops, and march towards Basorah.

Their troops having been soon assembled, they prepared for their departure. Aiesha, mounted on a camel, headed the forces in their march from Mecca towards Basorah.

When they arrived at a place called Jowab, they halted some time to refresh the troops, which step had like to have put an end to their expedition. The dogs of the village having gathered together, came running out, and barked at Aiesha for a considerable time.

A singular event stops them in their march.

This event appeared to her to be so ill an omen, that she immediately asked, with great surprize, what was the name of the place; and having been informed that it was called Jowab, she, quoting that versicle of the Koran which is often repeated in cases of imminent danger, “ My support is from God alone, in him do I trust, and unto him do I turn me.” declared she would not stir a step further, and prepared to dismount from her camel.

Alcoran, chap. 11th.

ALI.

Hegyra 36.
Ch. ar. 656.

The chiefs being greatly alarmed at a resolution which would put an end to the enterprize, earnestly intreated her not to abandon them; but the longer she reflected on that accident, the less she seemed inclined to go forwards. She declared that she had heard the prophet say when he was traveling with his wives, "I wish I had known it, and they should have lodged within the barking of the dogs of Jowáb;" that Mahomet had also formerly declared to her, that one of his wives should at a certain time be barked at by the dogs of the same village; that she ought to take care of it, for she would then be in most imminent danger.

It was no easy matter to eradicate such a kind of prejudice from the mind of a woman who from her infancy had imbibed enthusiastic and superstitious notions: However the chief officers of the army, who were sensible of the ill consequences that might result from so unlucky an accident, endeavoured to quiet the apprehensions of Aïesha, by suborning some peasants, who, for the lucre of a little money, agreed to assert that it was a mistake to call their village Jowáb, for it had never been known by that name, and they agreed to give it another, which probably was not so ill boding. Upon this they forthwith returned to Aïesha and informed her of the news. They even caused their witnesses to appear before her, who declared on their oath what they had promised to assert. But Aïesha
had

had not yet got over her fears, and she resolved to lye all night at the village, that she might have time to consider what resolution she should come to.

ALI.
Hegyra 36.
Ch. ar. 656.

Tellah and Zobeir, vexed to find that a stop was put to their march on account of such ridiculous difficulties, and knowing of how great importance it was to make the best use of their time (there being great cause to suspect that Ali would speedily march after them) contrived an expedient, which soon removed all obstacles. They previously instructed some horsemen of their army and sent them to a distance from the camp, who returned full gallop, crying out quick, quick, yonder comes Ali and his troops.

This artifice succeeded. Fear of the present danger prevailed over all apprehensions on account of the prediction; they all decamped in the greatest haste, and the superstitious Aïsha, nimbly leaping up on her camel, was soon foremost of the company, and led them on so briskly, that in a short time they arrived in sight of Basorah.

The revoltens
appear before
Basorah.

They did not expect that the city would make any great resistance. Tellah, as has been said, held a correspondence there, and had raised a considerable party of malecontents who had very roughly treated Othman Ebn Hanif, when he came to take possession of the government of that city in the room of him who had been appointed by the last Caliph. Othman was therefore obliged to

ALI.
Hegyra 36.
Ch. ær. 656.

return to Medina; but as there were great divisions amongst the inhabitants, by means of the party that had declared for Ali, he was recalled. On which he returned to Basorah, entered on the execution of his office; and strove to put an end to the sedition. In time, perhaps, he might have prevailed; but by the pernicious cabals of Tellah, a party was always kept up which would by no means agree to an accomodation.

The inhabi-
tants are de-
feated.

When Aiesha appeared with her army before the city, the new governor marched out at the head of his troops to prevent them from investing the place; but as he was inferior in numbers to his enemies, he was defeated at the first onset; and having lost about forty of his men in the skirmish, he was taken prisoner. They treated him in the most outrageous manner. The Arabians had a great veneration for their beards, a greater injury could not (in their opinion) be done them than to cut them off: and Aiesha's party, that they might add a kind of torment to the injury, tore out by the roots, hair by hair, the beard and eyebrows of the unfortunate governor. They kept him prisoner during a short time, after which they set him at liberty, as an example to all such as should dare to make resistance.

Ammâr as-
sembles the
inhabitants
to sound their
intentions.

Whilst Othman was in confinement, Ammâr his deputy undertook the defence of the city, and prepared to face the enemy. But as he well knew that divisions reigned amongst

amongst the inhabitants of Basorah, he was first desirous to sound how they stood affected towards their countrymen who were come in an hostile manner to attack them.

ALI.
Hegyra 36.
Ch. ar. 656,

He therefore called the inhabitants to the mosque to hold a consultation. One of them stood up and spoke in the following terms. "If these people come hither out of fear, they come from a country where a bird may be safe. If they make inquiry for the blood of Othman, we did not kill Othman; Wherefore take my advice, and send them back to the place from whence they came; for surely the cause of their coming hither is different from what they pretend."

That orator would probably have enlarged on the motives which he presumed had engaged Aïesha and her confederates to undertake that expedition; but the people did not give him time. So great a tumult arose that no measures could be resolved on; and thereby it was perceived, that the inhabitants were at great variance with each other.

In the mean time Aïesha and her train drawing nearer the city, some of the most moderate amongst the inhabitants went out to her, to know why she had raised such great disturbances in her own country. Aïesha, with a loud shrill voice, harranged the deputies and all the rest of the inhabitants present in a long speech; but whether she did not express herself clearly, or whether

A deputation
sent to Aï-
esha.

ALI.
Hegyra 36.
Ch. ar. 656.

passion prevented them from putting a proper construction on what she uttered, they differed in opinion touching her discourse. Some said she had spoken well, the opposite party gave them the lye; and from words they came to blows. But the combat was not very dangerous, for they only threw the gravel and pebbles at each other.

When the dispute was a little over, one of the Arabs approaching Aïsha, spoke to her in a very rational manner touching the step she had taken. "O mother of the faithful," said he, "the murdering of Othman was a thing of less moment than thy coming out from thy house upon this cursed camel. God hath bestowed on thee a vail and a protection: but thou hast rent the vail, and set the protection at nought. The same persons that now are witnesses of thy quarrelling here, will also be witnesses of thy death. If thou camest to us of thine own accord, return back to thine own house; if thou wast brought hither by force, call for assistance, and thou shalt find Mussulmen enough to conduct thee home with all honour and safety."

Another of the inhabitants, with design to upbraid the prophet's wife for having, against the modesty of her sex, put herself at the head of an army, came up to Tellah and Zobeir, and told them he perceived they had brought their mother with them, and asked if the officers and soldiers had not also brought

brought their wives to accompany them upon that expedition.

A. 11.
Hegyra 36.
Ch. ær. 656.

This reproach bore hard on Aïesha and all her retinue; who at the same time were far from being pleased with the first harangue, though they had not even a plausible answer to give either to the one or the other; insomuch that invectives soon ensued, which were followed by blows. The action was bloody, many being killed on each side. The next day it was renewed, but the troops of Aïesha sustained the greatest loss.

Battle between the revolters and the inhabitants of Basorah.

It may be truly said, that hitherto the parties had fought without scarce knowing why. Some of the most dispassionate of the inhabitants of Basorah, demanded a suspension of arms till the return of the deputies they were about to send to Medina, to make a proper enquiry about the cause of the present quarrel.

Aïesha and her adherents accepted the proposal of the inhabitants; but as the turbulent disposition of her adherents prevented them from remaining long inactive, they designed to seize Basorah by surprize: and in order to forward the success of their intended enterprize, they proposed to get the person of the governor into their hands.

The revolters in vain attempt to seize the governor.

Othman Ebn Hanif, whom they had so injuriously treated at the first attack of Basorah, was still governor of that city, into which he retired after his enlargement, and which he was now preparing to defend in the best

AL I.
Hegyra 36.
Ch. ar. 656.

best manner he could. To him they sent a messenger, requesting that he would come to their camp, in order to confer with Aiesha. But it may be reasonably supposed that considering the baseness of their late conduct, he had no inclination to put himself again into their power, by yielding to an invitation which he also concluded to be a fresh instance of their treachery. However it did not appear from the answer he returned, that he entertained the least suspicion of their design, for he alledged as a reason why he declined the conference, the convention that had been stipulated for a suspension of all hostilities on both sides, till the deputies should return.

Tellah and Zobeir, being highly vexed at missing their aim, resolved to make themselves amends by seizing the city itself, which they considered to be an important post that might serve their party as a place of arms.

They take
the city.

Taking advantage of a dark and tempestuous night, they surprized the city, and lodged themselves in the mosque. Othman did prodigies of valour in attempting to dislodge them; but as he had not a sufficient number of troops, he was obliged to retreat. And the enemy, encouraged by success, pursued and pushed him very hard. The governor, who had but an handful of soldiers about him, for a long time defended himself with great bravery; but at last resistance became vain, and he was seized by the enemy.

So soon as he was taken prisoner, word was sent to Aïsha, to know which way she would please to dispose of him. The first sentence she pronounced was death; but at the intercession of one of her attendants, who adjured her in the name of God, and the companions of the apostle, not to kill him, the sentence was changed into forty stripes, and imprisonment.

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So soon as full possession was taken of the new conquered city, Aïsha, together with Tellah and Zobeir, the leaders of the party, made their publick entry therein. They strove to gain the affections of the people, and to prevail on them unanimously to declare against Ali, whom they had devoted to destruction.

We shall now return to Medina, where Ali was endeavouring to fix the inhabitants more firmly in his interest. He looked upon the Medinians to be his firmest friends; for as his election was the work of their hands, he expected they would exert themselves to support it. He made a speech to the people at a general assembly held in the mosque. He loudly and warmly declaimed against the presumptuous designs of the rebels, who refused to acknowledge him as sovereign, and thereby manifestly controverted their right of conferring the crown. He exhorted them not to overlook so great an insult, and assured them that

The Caliph
exhorts the
Medinians to
rise up in his
defence.

ALI. that God would direct and help them in their
 Hegyra 36. affairs.
 Ch. ær. 656.

Though Ali was well beloved of the people, though they well knew he was fairly elected, and though he was allowed to be the best orator of the age, yet his harangue was far from having the desired effect. Instead of loud acclamations, and that readiness which he expected his friends would have shewn to take up arms without delay, and which was so necessary in order to prevent the spreading of the revolt; he had the mortification to find an universal silence and backwardness amongst them, the fear of a civil war seeming to have tyed up their tongues, as well as frozen their zeal for his cause.

Ziyád-ebn-Hantelah, a person of eminent rank and distinguished valour, was so moved at the indifference shewn by his countrymen, that he voluntarily stepped up to Ali and said, "Let whosoever will hold back, we will be forward."

This step of Ziyád made a strong impression upon the minds of the whole assembly. They were inwardly vexed that they had not shewn the same courage. Insensibly a murmur arose in behalf of the Caliph, and they seemed inclinable to join in his defence; but many of them were prevented by the reports which Aïsha and her party had artfully propagated touching the death of the last Caliph, not that they generally believed him to be guilty of so heinous a crime; but the

the very imputation of it made them backward to declare in his favour.

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But this impediment was soon removed. Two of the religious ansars, who were doctors of the mussulman law, and held in great esteem on account of the integrity of their lives, stood up in the midst of the assembly, and loudly pronounced that "The * imam Othman, master of the two testimonies, did not die by the master of the two testimonies.†" Meaning that Ali was not guilty of the death of Othman.

So solemn a decision caused all their scruples to vanish. Abu Kotadad, an ansar of great distinction, drawing his sword and shewing it to the people, said, "The apostle of God, upon whom be peace, girt me with this sword, which I have sheathed a long while; but it is now high time to draw it against these wicked men who are always deceiving the people."

All distinction of party being now at an end, and the inhabitants of Medina unanimously resolved to march out in defence of the Caliph; Ali, well pleased with the favourable resolutions of the people, was

* Imam, in Arabic, signifies a head or pontiff, and is the same amongst the Mahometans as a bishop or parish priest amongst the Christians. They gave the Caliphs the title of Imams, because they were supreme both in spirituals and temporals.

† The master of the two testimonies, signifies the Caliph, as head of the mussulman religion, which consists in these two fundamental points: "There is but one God. Mahomet is the apostle of God."

desirous

Ali.
Hog: ra 36.
Ch. ar. 656.

The governor
of Cufah re-
fuses to send
succours to
the Caliph.

desirous of marching after Aïesha and her party, in hopes of preventing the rebels from getting possession of Baforah; to which end he departed from the city at the head of about nine hundred men. But being informed at a place called Arrabdah, that it would be in vain, he halted there, and sent expresses to different parts of his dominions, with orders that they should send him speedy succours. During his stay there he also dispatched Mahomet the son of Abubecre, and Mahomet the son of Giaffer, with instructions to treat with the inhabitants of Cufah, and to obtain from them a timely reinforcement of troops; but their embassy was not attended with success. The governor of Cufah*, who in the beginning of the troubles had sent him word that all was well in those parts, and acquainted him with the particulars of all that concerned him there, perceiving how the face of things was changed, and apprehensive of the success of Aïesha and her associates at Baforah, began to be in suspense, and treated Ali's envoys with great coldness; and though they intreated him with the greatest earnestness, they could not prevail on him to declare for the Caliph.

The deputies finding that intreaties stood them in no stead, reproached him for his ingratitude and injustice: but this only served

* Abu Mufa.

to discover his ill-will towards Ali; for he declared with an oath, that the assassination of Othman still hung over his own, as well as their master's head; and they were resolved not to stir in the quarrel, unless compelled by absolute necessity, till they had cleared their hands of Othman's murderers. The envoys being unable to obtain any other answer, set out to join Ali, full of rage and vexation.

Ali.
Hegyra 36.
Ch. ær. 656.

They went to the camp at Arrabdah, expecting to have found the Caliph there; but he had quitted it, and was marched nearer to Basorah, having been joined by a reinforcement which the tribe of Thai had sent him under a chief named Saïd-ebn-Obeid. And shortly after, during his march, he received further succours from the tribe of Afed, which insensibly increased his little army, and inspired him with the most sanguine hopes of success in his designs.

The deputies who returned from Cufah, came up with him at Dulkhar, at the very time when Othman, the governor of Basorah, came to wait upon the Caliph, and give him an account of what passed there. Ali, perceiving upon his visage marks of the cruel treatment he had met with from Aïsha and her attendants, pitied his misfortune, and publicly bestowed high commendations on his fidelity and constancy.

The deputies he had sent to Cufah, then gave him an account of their negotiations.

The

ALI. The behaviour of Abu Musa touched him to the quick; however this insulting answer did not discourage him; he sent other deputies, who were as unsuccessful as the former; and upon their return, he finally resolved to send his eldest son Hasfan thither, together with Ammar-ebn-Yasar, (whom he appointed his colleague) with orders to make a fresh attempt, and to use all possible means for bringing over to his side the governor and inhabitants of that city.

Hasfan negotiates with the Cufians for the obtaining of succours.

It is a text in the Koran.

Abu Musa received Hasfan with great marks of respect; but when they came into the mosque to debate the matter, he opposed it with the same vigour as before, and exerted his utmost to prevent the people from complying with Ali's proposals. But things took a sudden turn; for a tumult beginning to arise in the assembly, Zeid-ebn-Sauchan stood up, and produced a letter which he had received from Aïesha, commanding him either to stay at home, or to come to her assistance; together with another to the Cufians to the same effect. Having read them both to the people, he said, "Aïesha was commanded to abide in her house, and we to fight till the sedition should be quelled. Now she hath commanded us to do her part, and hath taken ours upon herself."

The freedom with which Zeid had censured the conduct of Aïesha, provoked the opposite party, who began to murmur and utter

utter invectives, and a warm debate ensued : A L I.
 but Hasan appearing inclined to speak to Hegyra 36.
 the people, the tumult by degrees subsided, Ch. xx. 656.
 and silence having been obtained, he arose,
 and spoke thus : “ Your monarch,” said he,
 meaning the Caliph, “ requires your assist-
 ance, and it is both your duty and interest to
 grant it him. Can you alledge any just
 cause for refusing it ? Can any man truly up-
 braid him with having shewn a covetous in-
 clination, or with having perverted justice ?
 Will any amongst you say, that he hath intru-
 ded himself into the Caliphat, or is unworthy
 of that dignity ? The rebels, indeed, pretend
 they have taken up arms to avenge the death
 of Othman : but be not deceived, O ye
 men of Cufah ; the avenging Othman is
 but a pretext, the dethroning Ali is their
 real design. Ali, who was unanimously
 chosen at Medina, and to whom Tellah and
 Zobeir, that now head the rebels, took the
 oath of allegiance.”

This harangue had a greater effect than
 all the preceding negotiations. The Cufians
 were moved at the persecutions the Caliph
 suffered. Hasan, who was attentive to all
 that passed at the assembly, plainly saw the
 temper of the people, and, by his affable
 and condescending behaviour during his short
 stay in that city, intirely fixed the inhabi-
 tants in his interest. When he took his
 leave, he told them he was going to his fa-
 ther ; that he would acquaint him with their

ALI.
Hegyra 36.
Ch. xx. 656.

good intentions towards him, and give him hopes they would be speedily carried into execution. The Cufians having expreffed a defire of marching forthwith in defence of their fovereign, Hafan declared how greatly he was obliged to them for their readinefs, and at his departure told them, that fuch as thought fit to follow him, would do an eſſential ſervice to the ſtate, and he ſhould think it an honour to march at their head.

The Cufians
raife troops
for the Ca-
liph.

The promiſes of the Cufians were ſoon carried into effect, and about nine thouſand of them began their march. Hafan, who was equally ſurprized and pleaſed at the ſucceſs of his negotiation, forthwith diſpatched a meſſenger to the Caliph, to inform him of ſo happy an event.

This important news filled Ali and his party with joy. The higheſt encomiums were beſtowed on the zeal of the Cufians; and in order to ſhew his gratitude, the Caliph marched forwards, and met and welcomed them. He harangued the new recruits with his accuſtomed eloquence; and after having greatly praiſed their valour, for which they had been diſtinguiſhed on ſo many occaſions, and particularly at the time they conquered Perſia, he addreſſed them in the following terms, in relation to the preſent poſture of affairs :

“ I have called you hither, (ſaid he) brave Cufians, to be witneſſes between us and our brethren of Baſorah. It is my intention to
make

make use of gentle means, in hopes of bringing them to their duty without the shedding of mussulman blood. And if any amongst you maintain a correspondence, or have an interest in the place, I intreat that you will labour with me in bringing about an accommodation ; for I here openly declare, I prefer peace to all the advantages that may be gained by arms: since on which side soever the fortune of war declares, the portion of the subject is certain desolation.”

Al i.
Hegyra 36.
Ch. ær. 656.

The loud atclamations uttered by the people on the concluding this harangue, convinced the Caliph that he might rely on their favourable dispositions. Ali therefore shortly began his march to find out the rebels.

On receipt of this news, Aïesha and her party in Baforah began to be in no small perplexity. But when they saw the Caliph appear with his army, and pitch his camp near the walls of the city, they seemed to be in a despairing condition. The rebels having held several conferences in a very tumultuous manner, Tellah and Zobeir resolved to have an interview with Ali, in order to compromise matters upon the best terms they could procure.

Ali, who breathed only peace, readily agreed to confer with them. At the first interview the Caliph spoke to them with great moderation ; however in such terms as manifested their infidelity and perfidiousness ;

Conference
between Ali
and Zobeir.

ALI. in a word, their rebellion, for which he had
 Hegyra 36. not given them the least cause.

Ch. ar. 656. "Remember," said he to Zobeir, "what
 passed between the prophet, you and me,
 when he asked you, if you did not love his
 dear son Ali. You answered, Yes; and he
 replied, Notwithstanding this, a day will
 come when you shall rise up against him,
 and be the occasion of great miseries both
 to him and all the Mussulmen."

Zobeir re-
 solves to lay
 down his
 arms.

Zobeir, being equally moved at the mo-
 deration with which the Caliph spoke to
 him, and the reproach of having been false
 to that friendship he had sworn even in the
 presence of Mahomet, answered with a great
 shew of contrition: "I well remember it;
 and had I recollected my promise before, I
 would never have borne arms against you."
 Upon this he retired, and resolved that what
 turn soever affairs should take, he would no
 more oppose Ali.

But the envenomed Aïsha never ceased
 till she had brought him back to the former
 resolutions she had instilled into him: and
 that she might have no future cause to fear
 the unsteadiness of that Mussulman, she pre-
 vented his having any more interviews with
 the Caliph. And as Zobeir expressed great
 uneasiness on account of the oath of alle-
 giance he had taken to Ali at the time of his
 inauguration, * she bad him expiate his oath,

* Ockley, in his History of the Saracens; vol. II. fol. 42,
 says, It was the opinion of some that Abdollah, the son of
 Zobeir, gave his father the hint.

which

which he performed by *setting a slave at liberty. By means of this expedient, Zobeir again joined the rebels, and bore arms against Ali, at the battle which was fought shortly after.

ALI.
Hegyra 36.
Ch. ær. 656.

All the conferences that had passed were fruitless. In vain did the Caliph, who had reason and justice, as well as a numerous army on his side, take measures to bring about a reconciliation; the turbulent Aïsha would not listen to his terms, and defeated all his measures, insomuch that they were at last forced to have recourse to a decisive action.

The two armies drew up in order of battle, and lay on their arms opposite each other. Aïsha, in order to give vigour and courage to her friends, mounted her great camel, and was carried up and down the battle in a litter made like a cage. So soon as the signal was given, both sides engaged with equal fury and bravery. The battle was very bloody, and for a long time victory seemed doubtful to which party she should favour. But on the death of one of the rebel generals, Ali's troops had a manifest advantage.

Tellah, one of the chief commanders, finding the ardour of his troops greatly abated, used his utmost efforts to encourage

Tellah is killed.

* This was the method used by the Mussulmen to expiate an oath which they were unwilling to keep, or which would prejudice them to observe.

ALI.
Hegyra 36.
Ch. ær. 656.

them. Merwan, who was then with Ali, observed him, and said, "Behold a traytor and murderer of Othman, who, in hopes of bettering his condition, now appears the foremost amongst those that seek to revenge his blood; but I shall stop him in his career." And with these words he let fly an arrow which mortally wounded Tellah in the thigh. He was forthwith carried out of the battle to a house in Baforah, and his wound dressed, but he was soon sensible he had not long to live. A short time before he died, he saw one of Ali's men (who had probably been taken prisoner,) and being informed that he belonged to the emperor of the faithful, "Give me your hand then," said he, "that I may put mine into it; and by this action renew the oath of fidelity which I have already made to Ali." Which words were no sooner out of his mouth than he expired.

When this was told to Ali, he returned thanks, and said, "God would not call him to heaven till he had blotted out the first breach of his word by this last protestation of fidelity."

The death of
Zobeir.

Ali was at the same time informed that Zobeir, another commander of the rebels, had also lost his life. It has been observed that after his interview with the Caliph he had suffered himself to be seduced by Aïsha, and had again taken up arms against Ali; but as the two armies were on the point of engaging, he was seized with some fresh scruples, having been informed that a famous Mussulman, named

named Ammar-ebn-Yasser was in Ali's camp, and recollecting he had formerly heard Mahomet say, that Yasser was so great a lover of equity and justice, that the party he should espouse would be the honest one; the idea so affected him, that he silently withdrew out of the battle, and went towards Mecca. Being come as far as a valley, crossed by a rivulet called Sabaa, he met an arabian detachment commanded by Hanaf-ebn-Kais, who had sided with neither party, and knowing they were ready to come to blows, was encamped there with his men, attending the success of the battle, with an intent to join the conqueror.

ALI.
Hegyra 36.
Ch. xx. 656.

It appears however from the relation of Mirkoud, a persian historian, that Hanaf was much more inclined to the Caliph than to the other party: for seeing Zobeir at a distance, who was coming towards him, and to whose treachery he was no stranger, he asked his men, if there was nobody that would undertake to give him a good account of Zobeir?

Amru-ebn-Giarmouz stepping out undertook the commission, and immediately rode up to Zobeir, who bad him keep his distance; but after a short conversation growing into greater confidence of Zobeir, they both alighted from their horses. Whilst they were conversing on what passed in the Caliph's army, Zobeir cried out, Salat, that is to prayers, (for the hour of prayer was come) and as he prostrated himself to pray, Amru seized the opportunity, and with one blow of his cimeter severed his head from his body.

ALI.
Hegyra 36.
Ch. ær. 656.

Ali troubled
at Zobeir's
death.

That Mussulman instead of carrying the head to his captain, as he was ordered to do, ran instantly to the Caliph's army, at the time victory had declared in favour of Ali. Amru flattered himself that by presenting to the Caliph the head of so considerable an enemy, he should enhance the advantages the Caliph had obtained. But Ali, far from testifying the least satisfaction, could not help shedding tears at the sight. He spoke very harshly to Amru, and even threatened him with hell. And he who had expected an ample recompence, was astonished at such a rate to see the matter take so different a turn, that laying aside all respect he said to the Caliph, " You are the evil genius of the Mussulmen; if one delivers you from your enemies, you immediately threaten him with hell: and if a man kills any of your adherents, he becomes instantly a companion of the devil. And so great was the rage of Amru that without uttering another word he drew his sword, and plunged it in his own breast.

By the death of Tellah and Zobeir, and the utter defeat of the rebels, Ali's victory was compleat. And he had no longer reason to fear any opposition from enemies in the heart of his dominions; Aïesha herself was made prisoner; vain had she attempted to escape amongst the runaways; * her camel having been

* So long as Aïesha's camel stood on his legs the hottest of the battle was about him. Tabû says that three score and ten

been hamstrung in the heat of the action, she was obliged to lye upon the field till the battle was over, and there the Caliph had an interview with her.

ALI.
Hegyra 36.
Ch. ær. 656.

The conference began with mutual reproaches. However, Ali in the end treated her with great civility and moderation, and dismissed her to Medina with a very good equipage commanded by his two sons. He required her to remain in her house, not to intermeddle any more with state affairs, and particularly not to join for the future in any faction, which would spare her the shame of reflecting upon herself for having been a second time the authoreſs of ſuch diſturbances as ſhe had already occaſioned, to the great detriment of her country.

Conference
between Ali
and Aieſha.

After the departure of Aieſha, Ali having given orders for collecting all the booty taken from the enemy, took a reſolution to diſpoſe of it in ſuch a manner as was likely to gain the love of all the army; for he directed that a * conſiderable part of it ſhould be divided amongſt the representatives of † ſuch of his ſoldiers as had been killed in the battle. And having conſtituted Abdallah-ebn-Abbas governor of Baſorah, in a ſhort time he departed from that city.

ten men's hands were cut off that held his bridle. And Aieſha's litter was ſtuck ſo full of arrows and javelins, that it looked like a porcupine. Ockley's Life of Ali, fol. 46.

* Ockley ſays all the booty. Ibid.

† They did not exceed one thouſand. Ibid.

The

ALI.
Hegyra 36.
Ch. ar. 656.

Ali fixes his
residence at
Cufah.

The Caliph went to Cufah, where he fixed the seat of his empire. Meaning by that honourable mark of distinction to testify his gratitude for the services done him by the inhabitants of that city, to whose assistance and valour, he confessed, he was indebted for the victory he had just obtained.

Ali solicits
Moawiyah to
acknowledge
him for Caliph.

This great success having rendered Ali exceeding powerful, he seemed to be no longer apprehensive of any molestation from Moawiyah; he was unwilling at that time to attack the governor of Syria with open force, and overlooking the indecent treatment he had received from that Mussulman, on account of a letter he had formerly sent him, he resolved to write to him a second time in hopes of prevailing with him to submit to his authority.

Amru sides
with Moawiyah.

Moawiyah for a time declined to send any satisfactory answer. He was unwilling to take the least step without previously consulting Amru-ebn-al-As, that famous conqueror of Egypt, who having been appointed governor of that province by Omar, had been deprived of, and afterwards restored to it by Othman, and had been lately dismissed from that post by Ali. Moawiyah did not fail entering into a strict league with so considerable a malecontent, and they in concert used their utmost efforts to protract the disorders, that they might by degrees deprive the Caliph of the hearts of the people. Upon receipt, therefore of Ali's letter, Moawiyah communicated

tated the contents to Amru, and desired he would inform him of his sentiments upon the matter. And he at the same time assured him, that he was still bent on revengeing the death of the Caliph Othman, that all Syria entertained the same design, and that he would do what in him lay to spur them on.

Ali.
Hegyra 36.
Ch. x. 656.

Amru was in Palestine when he received Moawiyah's letter: It gave him the most sensible pleasure to find that governor still persisting in his resolutions to oppose Ali. He returned for answer that he soon proposed to second him, and heartily join in taking vengeance for the Caliph's death.

He no longer bore in mind that Othman had formerly omitted no means of discrediting him, and that so soon as he was elected Caliph, he had deprived him of the government of Egypt, to which he had restored him only on account of the then exigency of affairs, and of the great credit he was in amongst the Egyptians. When Ali ascended the throne, he forthwith again dismissed him from that government, which step induced Amru to declare against him, and to join with Moawiyah in that fatal union which filled the mussulman empire with intestine divisions, and in the end deprived the Caliph of his crown and life.

The connections between Moawiyah and Amru, were greatly strengthened by the victory Ail had just obtained. They foresaw that
if

ALI: if they remained divided, the power he had gained by such an advantage would enable him easily to crush them both. But that by uniting their strength, the enterprize would be attended with much greater difficulties; and it might even be presumed, that two chieftains equally renowned for their conquests, and skill in politics, might be able to counterbalance the Caliph's authority, and in time effectually cause his destruction.

Moawiyah brings over the Syrians to his party. During the time Moawiyah expected the arrival of Amru, he used all possible means to incense the Syrians against Ali. He represented him as the assassin of Othman, whose death he was concerned to avenge, not only as he was a descendant from Ommiyah, as well as the Caliph, but also out of gratitude for the signal service he had done him in bestowing on him the government of Syria, of which the new Caliph was bent to deprive him.

It has appeared that Moawiyah had already raised a considerable body of troops more than sufficient to have faced the Caliph, at the time of the first disturbances in Medina: but Ali's forces were so much augmented since his late victory, that it was unsafe to march out against him, without having first taken the utmost precautions. Besides, Moawiyah was revolving in his mind an important scheme which he could not carry into execution without a body of troops sufficient to support his ambitious designs.

For

For this cause he used his utmost efforts to gain the whole hearts of the people; and without making the least discovery of those motives which were the main springs of his conduct, he pretended that his only view was to revenge the death of Othman. The populace who had testified their affection to that Caliph at the time his bloody garments were displayed in public, gave fresh proofs of their regard for him when Moawiyah harangued them on the same subject in the chief mosque of Damascus.

ALI.
Hegyra 36.
Ch. xi. 656.

He loudly accused Ali of having sacrificed Othman to his ambitious views of obtaining the throne. He asserted that the election of the new Caliph had not been confirmed by the voices of the people; that he had committed outrages on several of the Mussulmen, to force them to pay him homage; that Telah and Zobeir having protested against his election, he had pursued them sword in hand, and having obtained a victory over those noble defenders of the blood of Othman, and the liberties of their country, he had presumed to ill treat the widow of the prophet; that indeed he had not taken away the life of the mother of the faithful, but that his pretended moderation was owing to his apprehensions of stirring up the whole nation against him: and in a word, that the triumphant Caliph was preparing to march into Syria in order to deprive him of his government.

This

AL1.
Hegyra 36.
Ch. ar. 656.

This speech, which he uttered with great vehemence, made an impression on the minds of his auditors, and a murmuring was heard in the assembly which seemed to foretel the concurrence of the people. He seized the lucky moment, and still the more to move them cried out, "Syrians, will you forsake me in so just a cause? if I avenge the death of Othman by shedding every drop of my blood (if need so require,) shall not I revenge the death of your sovereign, who was your benefactor, your father, &c."

Amru arrives at Damascus.

This harrangue was broke off by the arrival of Amru, who suddenly marched into Damascus at the head of a body of troops which he brought to join Moawiyah. It is asserted that this unexpected arrival had been artfully concerted by the two captains, with a view that the people, already deeply affected by Moawiyah's speech, might by their acclamations shew their approbation of the scene that was about to pass in their presence.

So soon as Moawiyah was informed of Amru's arrival, he descended from the pulpit to go and meet him, and was followed by the whole assembly. On his way he told such as were about him that Amru's arrival was miraculous; and that he could not account for his having been so expeditious: in this manner he advanced to the principal square, opposite the mosque, where he found Amru.

The

The people were all in amaze to see him fall prostrate at Moawiyah's feet; but how great was their astonishment when they heard Ainru acknowledge him for * Caliph, and take the oath of allegiance to him. However the spectators were too much warmed with what had already passed, not to follow this example. In short, they proclaimed him with a kind of frenzy, and the whole city of Damascus was filled with tumultuous acclamations in behalf of the new Caliph. The news of this extraordinary inauguration soon reached all the other cities of Syria, and each of them envied the good fortune of Damascus, which, by this event, would become the capital of the mussulman empire.

A. 1. 1.

Hegyra 36.
Ch. 22. 656.

Moawiyah is
acknowledg-
ed Caliph.

He informs
Ali of that
event.

Ali was not long a stranger to these extraordinary emotions; but he must have been sensibly touched at the insulting manner in which Moawiyah communicated the transaction to him. That governor kept the Caliph's courier at Damascus till the time of the revolution, and when it had happened, he sent for the courier, and delivered to him the packet, which informed his master of the fatal blow just given to his authority.

This resolution was by so much the more formidable, as Moawiyah had gained the greatest reputation among those he governed: besides, Syria was a very extensive province,

* Abu'l Pharagius says that they did not swear to him by the title of Caliph, but only of Emir.

and

ALI. and capable of receiving assistance from foreigners, by means of its sea ports on the Mediterranean.

Ali marches against the rebels.

Ali, without delay, strove to reduce the rebels to a just sense of their duty by using gentle means; he promised them a general pardon, and an act of oblivion, but all in vain. At length, negotiations proving ineffectual, he found himself under a necessity of taking contrary measures, and of using force, to obtain that which moderation could not effect. He therefore departed from Cusah at the head of ninety thousand men, and marched towards Syria.

On his arrival upon the frontiers of that province, he halted some time to refresh his troops, greatly fatigued by their march. And there, according to the relation of arabian historians, an extraordinary event happened, which greatly augmented the love and respect they bore to the Caliph.

He discovers a well which furnishes his troops with water.

In the place where Ali encamped, water failed him, and he sent into the neighbourhood to inquire out a person, who might shew them a well or cistern capable of supplying his army. They brought before him an old hermit, whose cell was not far from the camp; and the Caliph having interrogated him, he answered that he knew of no more than one cistern, which might contain about two or three buckets of water; but he at the same time gave them to understand, that there were means of finding greater plenty.

Whereupon

Whereupon the Caliph replied, that he knew ALI.
Hegyra 36.
Ch. ar. 656. the ancient patriarchs had digged wells thereabouts; but the difficulty was to find them.

The hermit said he had been informed by some ancient men, that there was a well; but that the mouth of it was closed by a stone of an enormous size; that no man knew where it lay; and the tradition of the country was, that no person could find and open it, but a prophet, or one sent by a prophet.

Ali forthwith caused his men to dig in a spot which he pointed out to them; and not far from the surface they found the huge stone mentioned by the hermit, which the Caliph removed with the greatest ease imaginable.

The hermit surprized at the sight, fell at Ali's feet, acknowledged him to be a prophet, and by way of confirming the eminent title he had bestowed on him, ran to his cell, whence he brought an old worn out parchment; which he said was written by the hand of Simeon ben Safah, otherwise called Simon, the son of Cephas, one of the apostles of Jesus Christ, wherein there was an account given of the coming of the last prophet, and the miraculous discovery of the well, and taking away the stone, by his lawful successor. The credulous Mussulmen looked upon the parchment as an authentic evidence which it would be criminal to dispute, and joined with Ali

ALI.
Hegyra 37.
Ch. ar. 657.

in returning thanks to heaven for so wonderful an event.

After Ali had given his troops some time for refreshment, and taken water sufficient for their use, he continued his march towards Seffein; where he knew the enemy's army was posted*. The proximity of the two armies did not occasion any memorable action during the space of a year; but after several fruitless conferences in order to an accomodation between the parties, many skirmishes happened between small bodies of troops on each side, which were from time to time sent out to scour the country; it seeming as if the two chiefs were afraid of hazarding a general engagement.

Skirmishes
between the
two armies.

However, in a short time, as many men were killed in the † several skirmishes, as if a pitched battle had been fought. Ali lost ‡ five thousand men, the most illustrious of whom was Ammar-ebn-Yassar, Ali's general of the horse. He had been present with Mahomet in several battles, at which he had done him signal service, and had acquired a great reputation amongst the Mussulmen: he was about ninety years of age when he was

* That army consisted of eighty thousand men. Ockley's hist. of the Saracens, vol. II. p. 50.

† It is reported that in the space of one hundred and ten days there were no less than ninety skirmishes between them. Ibid.

‡ Ockley says, twenty five thousand; and though he produces no authority for the same, yet, it is highly probable, from the nature of things, that his observation is right. Ibid.

killed,

killed, and his death was greatly lamented by them all.

ALI.

Hegyra 37.
Ch. ær. 657.

Upon the death of Ammar, Ali with twelve thousand chosen men, so fiercely attacked Moawiyah's army, that he threw them into the utmost confusion. However, the Caliph, with a view to spare the blood of his soldiers, challenged Moawiyah to a single combat, and offered that the conqueror should enjoy the whole: but the governor of Syria declined the combat, spight of the remonstrances of Amru, who declared he thought the proposal very fair, and that he could not avoid accepting it. But Moawiyah shewed himself to be of a different opinion, for he said that Ali never fought hand to hand but he killed his adversary, and he had no inclination to undergo the same fate. But Amru still representing to him that his reputation would be blasted by such a refusal, Moawiyah in a rage at being so hard driven, put an end to the discourse, and told Amru, he wanted him out of the way that he might afterwards enjoy the government himself.

Moawiyah
refuses to fight
with Ali in
single com-
bat.

Moawiyah, not chusing to engage personally at the head of his troops, kept himself out of the reach of danger during the several skirmishes that passed between the two armies after Ali's arrival. In these combats Moawiyah sustained great loss; which, according to the arabian historians, amounted to forty five thousand men.

ALL.
Hegyra 37.
Ch. ær. 657.

Ali being encouraged by the daily advantages he gained, was in hopes of getting a compleat victory, whether the enemy should resolve on fighting or retreating: but Moawiyah having called a council to consider what measures were proper to be taken in their present unhappy situation, they bethought themselves of a stratagem likely to raise divisions amongst Ali's troops, and free themselves from the difficulty.

Stratagem
used by Mo-
awiyah to a-
muse the Ca-
liph's troops.

The expedient was to fix books of the Koran on the points of their lances, and cry out, "This is the book which ought to decide all our differences; and which prohibits the shedding musliman blood without cause, as is now done." Moawiyah greatly relying on the success of this artifice, put it to the proof during an action in which his troops were very hard pressed, and on the point of being utterly routed. He, at a proper opportunity, caused the detachment, who bore the pikes I have mentioned, to advance; and so soon as the Irakians, in whom the chief strength of Ali's army consisted, saw this, they gave over fighting, and required that they might retreat. Ali did all in his power to re-animate his soldiers; he represented to them that it was only an artifice of Moawiyah and Amru (who he said had no relation to religion or the Koran) and suggested to them by despair; but spight of his remonstrances they threw down their arms, and threatened not only to desert their general, but to deli-

ver

ver him up into the hands of the enemy, if he did not cause a retreat to be forthwith founded. Ali.
Hegyra 37.
Ch. ær. 657.

Thus, by the tumultuous conduct of the bigotted Irakians, was Ali forced to retreat, at the very instant he was on the point of easily gaining a compleat victory.

So soon as the battle was at an end, a ne- Proposal to
determine
differences by
the opinion of
arbitrators.gociation was set on foot between the two armies, to determine the difference in an amicable manner, since it was not thought proper to decide the matter by the sword. It was proposed, that according to the meaning of the Koran, and the tradition of the apostle, the whole should be referred to the arbitration of two men, the one to be chosen by Ali, the other by Moawiyah.

This measure having been resolved on, without Ali's knowledge or consent, they asked him if he approved of the expedient. Ali coldly answered, "He that is not at liberty cannot give his advice; you may manage this affair in such manner as you think fit." It plainly appearing by the Caliph's answer, that he was in no wise satisfied with the method proposed, they who had begun the negociation, took every step in their power to terminate it; and of their own accord they nominated as arbitrator for Ali, Abu Musa-al Ashari, an honest well meaning man, but exceeding simple.

Ali had more reasons than one to disapprove of him, for Abu Musa had formerly

ALI.
Hegyra 37.
Ch. ar. 657.

suffered himself to be drawn aside, and had forsaken the Caliph's interest. He mentioned his dislike of the man to the chiefs of the Irakians, who had undertaken the management of the affair, and desired they would dismiss Abu Musa, and appoint Abdollah-ebn-Abbas in his stead: but he was answered that he was his cousin german, and they would have none but such as should deal impartially between him and Moawiyah. He then nominated Alashtar, but they were resolved he should accept of Abu Musa.

On the part of Moawiyah was named as arbitrator, the famous Amru-ebn-al-As, deservedly reputed the most sensible man of the age. The two referees took a security, signed by Ali and Moawiyah, and both the armies, for themselves and their families, that all should contribute to their assistance to ratify and confirm what they should agree upon.

So soon as the security was signed, a treaty was drawn up, the title of which caused much altercation. The secretary had begun it with these words. "Ali, chief and commander general of the Mussulmen, agrees to a peace with Moawiyah upon the following terms." Moawiyah having read the title, refused to sign the treaty, and said, "I should be a very wicked man indeed, should I make war on him, whom I acknowledge to be chief and commander general of all
to

the faithful." Amru-ebn-al-As also disputed that title, and said it ought to be blotted out. And on the other side, Ali's adherents counselled him by no means to give it up.

ALI.
Hegyra 37.
Ch. ar. 657.

Ali knew not at first what resolution to take in the affair, but he soon resolved to forego the title for the sake of peace, and he gave his reasons for such a resolution, in a conference he held on that subject with Hanaf-ebn-Kais.

"I remember, said he, that when I was formerly secretary to my father in law Mahomet, I drew up articles of peace between him and Sohail, who had revolted against him, in which I had intitled Mahomet the apostle and messenger of God. Sohail, seeing the title, refused to sign the treaty, saying, if I had acknowledged your father in law to be the apostle and messenger of God, I should have had no peace to sign, for I would never have made war against him. I acquainted Mahomet with this difficulty, who answered me, "Blot out the title forthwith; it in no wise depends upon this treaty; time will manifest the truth of it; and remember that a day will come, when you will find yourself in the same case." Ali therefore observing to Hanaf that he should advance the public tranquillity by foregoing the title on that occasion, declared that he thought himself under an obligation of complying; and more especially as he was countenanced

ALI. by so venerable an example as that of his
 Hegyra. 37. father-in-law.
 Ch.ar. 657.

So soon as the difficulty was removed, the treaty was signed; and in a short time Ali retired to Cufah, and Moawiyah to Damascus, leaving each of them their army under the command of one of their generals, and as to things concerning religion they each appointed an Imam.

The manner
 in which the
 two arbitra-
 tors act on
 that occasion.

The authority given to the arbitrators having specified the * place of meeting to hold their conferences, they arrived there some time after the departure of Ali and Moawiyah. Amru, who well knew the genius of his partner, treated him with the utmost civility and respect, and at last had so far insinuated himself into, and gained so great credit with Abu Musa, as to persuade him, that it would be utterly impracticable ever to bring matters to an accommodation without deposing both the competitors, and leaving the choice of a third to the people.

This important article once fixed, they returned each to his camp, and on the day appointed for publishing their award, the troops of Ali and Moawiyah advanced near each other, and a tribunal was raised between the two armies, from which each of the arbitrators was publickly to pronounce his award.

* Dumat al Jondel, a place lying between Mecca, Cufah and Syria. Ockley, vol. II. page 56.

There

There was a kind of polite contention between them, touching which of the two should speak first. Abu Musā would have yielded the honour to Amru; but he had his reasons for declining it, and seemed so determined to give the other the preference, that at last he was persuaded to accept it. Abu Musā therefore first ascended the tribunal, and with a loud voice uttered these words: "I depose Ali and Moawiyah from the Caliphate, to which they both lay claim, in like manner as I take this ring from my finger:" and having made this declaration he immediately came down.

Upon this Amru went up, and said "You have heard how Abu Musā has on his part deposed Ali; I, on my own part, depose him also; and I give the Caliphate to Moawiyah, and invest him therewith, in like manner as I put this ring upon my finger: and this I do with the greater reason and justice, as he is Othman's heir and avenger, and the worthiest of all men to succeed him."

The friends of Ali, amazed at this extraordinary publication of the referees, complained grievously of the conduct of Abu Musā, who, by way of exculpating himself, accused Amru of not having performed the agreements made between them. From complaints they came to ill language, and Abu Musā, ashamed of his conduct, and justly fearing Ali's displeasure, besides not thinking himself

ALI.

Hegyra. 37.

Ch. ar. 657.

ALI.
Hegyra 37.
Ch. ær. 657.

himself safe in the army, fled to Mecca : and the friends of Moawiyah, sensible how advantageous this determination was to them, resolved to support this election of their chief, with all their might.

Rise of the
schism be-
tween the
Mussulmen.

At this time began that so famous schism amongst the Mahometans when the two parties not only cursed one another, but carried matters so far as to come to a mutual solemn excommunication, which was always pronounced when they harangued the people in their mosques, and which was practised a long time by the descendants of Ali and Ommiyah, of which last house were Othman and Moawiyah.

The Kare-
jites quit Ali's
party.

Whilst these things were transacting in Syria, with a view (as was pretended) of settling the tranquillity of the mussulman state, Ali, to his great grief, found himself deserted by a sect, which till that time had appeared firmly attached to his interest. These sectaries were called Karejites, and were a kind of thorough enthusiasts, who acknowledged no authority but such as might best promote their interest.

After Ali had retired to Cufah, some of the Karejites came to him ; they reproached him for having referred that to the judgment of men, which ought to be decided by God alone: that instead of observing the treaty he had imprudently entered into, he ought to pursue his enemies, who were also the enemies of God, without giving quarter.

Ali

Ali answered, that having plighted his faith, he thought himself obliged to keep it; and that in so doing he obeyed what the law of God prescribed. But the Irakians replied, that there was no other judge or arbitrator between him and Moawiyah but God alone, that what he had done was a sin, and that he ought to repent of it.

ALI.
Hegyra 37.
Ch. x. 657.

Ali remonstrated to them with great warmth, that if it was a sin, it lay at their own door, who had shewn so great inconstancy and stubbornness. He bid them remember that when Moawiyah caused the Alcoran to be carried at the head of his army, he told them it was a meer artifice of the enemy, but that nevertheless they had ceased fighting without his orders; and that in short it was highly injurious in them to urge him to break a treaty which they themselves had forced him to sign, and which he could not contravene without being guilty of perjury.

The rebels, not in the least satisfied with these reasons, urged what they had further to say by way of reply, and the conference ending in a quarrel, they openly revolted from Ali, and chose for their captain Abdollah-ebn-Waheb, who appointed Naharwan (a town between Bagdat and Waset, four miles east of the river Tigris,) for the place of their rendezvous. Thither came all such as were discontented with Ali, of which there was a great number from Cusah, Basorah, and other parts of Arabia.

Ali's

ALI. Ali's thoughts were at first so totally taken up with Moawiyah, whom he considered as much the more formidable enemy, that he took little notice of the new formed party : but hearing that they were twenty five thousand men strong, and had by dint of the sword propagated doctrines which were absolutely contrary to the laws of Mahomet, he resolved to exterminate the sect.

Hegyra 38. However, he first endeavoured to gain them by gentleness, and to bring them back to their duty by good advice ; but these means proving ineffectual, he put himself at the head of a numerous body of forces, and marched out against them, and encamped within sight of the rebels tents.

Ali disperses the Karejites. Before he began the battle, he made use of this expedient, in hopes of bringing them to obedience : he caused a standard to be planted at the head of his camp, with a writing fixed to the flag-staff, importing, that all such as should come under it should have good quarter ; and if any of them would return to Cusah, they should there find a sanctuary.

He caused the same thing to be proclaimed by sound of trumpet, and had the pleasure to find his stratagem successful. The rebel troops soon dispersed themselves ; and of their numerous army only four thousand men remained together : however, Abdollah was resolved with this small number to signalize his bravery by a desperate attempt. He attacked Ali's armies, notwithstanding the great inequality

inequality of numbers: but his rashness was duly punished, for he and all his men were cut in pieces, except nine only, which was the very number Ali lost in the battle.

This victory having re-united the Arabians under the government of Ali, he thought his authority was well established, and would have marched against Moawiyah immediately after he had won the battle, in hopes that the news of his great success might have staggered Moawiyah's party, and smoothed the way to his gaining equal advantages in Syria. But his chief officers represented to him, that it would be proper to give the troops some time for refreshing themselves, and making due preparations for a war, which threatened to be of long continuance. Ali followed their advice, and formed his camp at Nakilah, near Cufah. There his troops had time to recover their fatigue, and there his army was considerably strengthened by new recruits, whom he caused to be well instructed in discipline, in order to fit them for the trade of war.

Whilst the Caliph was making ready his forces to act against Moawiyah, that formidable rival was using all possible measures to enable him to stand his ground against Ali, and to deprive him of the obedience of such of his subjects as still remained firm in his interest: in particular he strove to raise disturbances in Egypt, which he brought about in a very artful manner.

Egypt

ALI.
Hegyra 38.
Ch. ær. 658.

Ali prepares
to march out
against Moa-
wiyah.

A.L.I.

Hegyra 38.
Ch. ær. 658.

Egypt still continued faithful to Ali. Some considerable emotions had indeed happened in that province at the beginning of his reign; the Egyptians had insisted that he ought to punish the assassins of Othman; and he, unwilling to engage in so nice an affair, having shewn a great backwardness in complying with their request, they refused to acknowledge Saad-ebn-Kais, whom he had appointed governor over them, in the room of Amru.

Saad gains possession of his government in Egypt.

Their first warmth being a little abated, Saad again returned to Egypt, and gained possession of his government. That Mussulman was a man of consummate prudence and known fidelity, and behaved in his post with so much caution and skill, that though there was in the province a numerous party of men totally devoted to Moawiyah, he not only found means to maintain Ali's authority without displeasing his opponents, but also gained the good will of the greatest part of them.

He is suspected by Ali, through the artifice of Moawiyah.

The artful Moawiyah foreseeing that all his practices in that country would be fruitless, whilst it should be under the conduct of such a governor, resolved within himself to get Saad recalled. For which purpose he caused a report to be spread over all Syria, that he was very well satisfied in respect to Egypt, which he knew would declare for him in due time; that this governor was his friend and acted in concert with him, and therefore had

had not attacked the party of the Othmanians; that he could the more rely on him, as he acted with uncommon prudence; and that they might boldly trust him with their most important secrets, without fear of his disclosing them.

ALI.
Hegyra 38.
Ch. xxi. 658.

This report being first spread with a pretended caution and reserve, was soon propagated in all parts. Moawiyah, who had his spies and concealed friends even in Ali's court, found means to hint suspicions of that governor's misconduct, which they attempted to make appear from his moderate behaviour to Ali's enemies; in a word they omitted nothing capable of giving the Caliph an ill impression of him.

The post which Saad then possessed was too lucrative not to rouse the desires of the greedy courtiers, many of whom industriously strove to forward the belief of this invidious accusation, with a view to ruin the governor, and enjoy his spoils. By this artifice was Ali deceived; they represented Saad to him as a false traytor. It was with great difficulty he could believe the accusation true; but they whose interest it was that he should believe it, were so indefatigable in their applications and remonstrances, that at last he recalled Saad from his government, and appointed Mahomet, the son of Abubeker, (the first Caliph) in his stead.

Saad is recalled and his government given to Mahomet.

The conduct of this new governor produced just such an effect as Moawiyah hoped for

ALI for from the change. Mahomet thought he should recommend himself to Ali by treating all his enemies, and above all those of the faction of Othman, with the utmost rigour. This imprudent zeal exasperated the Egyptians against the new governor; even those who were Ali's fastest friends could not help condemning the rigour with which he treated the opposite party. They foresaw with great grief that such a procedure would intirely destroy the Caliph's interest; and in a very short time the whole province was divided and at war with each other, and their dissensions and disorders were carried to the greatest height.

Malec Shutur, appointed his successor, is poisoned.

Ali, being speedily informed how highly prejudicial it would be to his interest in Egypt, should Mahomet be any longer continued governor of that province, appointed Malec Shutur (sometimes called Ushur Malec) to succeed him, and restore his authority there. It is highly probable that Malec was a man of no inconsiderable abilities, and it seems that Moawiyah was afraid his arrival in Egypt might ruin his project, for so soon as he had notice of the sending this new governor, he dealt with a countryman that lived upon the confines of Arabia and Egypt, at whose house Malec Shutur was to lodge, to give him poison in the entertainment he had prepared for him. The peasant, who was a friend to Moawiyah, punctually executed his orders, and

and gave him poisoned honey to sup, of which he died in the house.

ALI.
Hegyra 38.
Ch. ær. 658.

Moawiyah having soon received the news, which he expected with the greatest impatience, dispatched in all haste Amru-ebn-al-As, with six thousand horse, to take possession of the government of Egypt in his name. That general marched with such expedition, that in a few days he reached the capital city; where he joined Ben Scharig, chief of Othman's party, who waited only for a favourable opportunity to retaliate on the governor the injuries he had done to the Egyptians. The two chiefs joined their forces, and marched out in quest of the enemy.

Amru seizes
Egypt for
Moawiyah.

Mahomet, who retained the title and authority of governor for Ali, till another was sent to succeed him, had collected as many troops as he could, in hopes of bridling the rebels, but those troops were not numerous enough to enable him to withstand such considerable succours as were brought to them by Amru and Scharig: infomuch that having marched up to those two generals, to give them battle, ere they advanced farther into the country, he was beaten; and, what added to his misfortune, he fell alive into his enemys hands, who quickly slew him, and inclosing his dead body in the carcass of an embowelled ass, (to shew their detestation of him for the cruelties he had inflicted on them) they burned it to ashes.

Mahomet is
killed.

ALI.
Hegyra 38.
Ch. ær. 658.

The revolution of affairs caused by the loss of this battle, filled Ali with grief. He sent for Abdallah ebn Abbas, from Basorah, of which city he was governor, that he might enjoy the pleasure of his conversation, and that they might together take such measures as were most proper in the melancholy situation of his affairs.

Hadrami
takes Basorah
by surprize.

It is a little amazing that Ali did not resolve to make use of his numerous army, which was encamped at Nakilah, and had fully recovered their fatigue, and forthwith to march out against an active enemy, who lost not a moment, and who being already master of Egypt, was on the point of enlarging his conquests: but Ali wasted his time in useless conferences and consultations. Moawiyah, who was watchful to take advantage of all opportunities, was no sooner informed of Abdallah's departure from Basorah, than he sent out two thousand horse, under the command of Hadrami, who advanced up to the city, and took it by surprize. Abdallah had constituted Ziyad his lieutenant in that place: and the deputy not having troops sufficient to withstand Hadrami, abandoned the town on the arrival of the enemy, and informed Ali how very necessary it was to send him speedy succours, that he might at least be able to keep the field.

The Caliph without delay caused a considerable body of troops to march to his assistance

tance which arrived so opportunely that ^{ALI.} Ziyad fought out Hadrami, engaged him near ^{Hegyra 38,} Basorah, and totally routed the enemy, whose ^{Ch. ar. 658:} general was killed in the action. Upon this ^{He is de-} the city surrendered to Ali's government, ^{feated, and} who, being a little encouraged by this advance- ^{the city re-} tage, forthwith sent away Abdallah to re- ^{taken.} assume the government, who returned to the city, and used his best means to put it in such a posture, as to prevent any future surprise.

This event happened in the close of the ^{Hegyra 39.} 38th year of the Hegyra. The next year ^{Ch. ar. 659:} passed without any considerable adventures; for the Syrians being weary of the war, undertook nothing against the Arabians, who were unable to do more than stand upon the defensive.

After a short cessation, in the beginning of ^{Hegyra 40.} the 40th year of the Hegyra, Moawiyah ^{Ch. ar. 660.} signalized himself by new exploits. The ^{Moawiyah} private correspondence he had kept in the ^{becomes} province of Hejaz, induced him to form a ^{master of He-} resolution of sending a body of troops to that ^{jaz.} province, in order to seize upon its two principal towns, and by that means to open himself a way into Yemen, or Arabia Felix.

The conquest of Hejaz by the Syrians was so rapid, that it had rather the appearance of a journey than a military expedition. The Arabians, who had full time to have put their towns in a proper posture of defence, and prepare an army, had neither taken care of the

ALI.
Hegyra 40.
Ch. ar. 660.

one, nor provided the other ; infomuch that on the first approach of the Syrians, the governors of the chief places abandoned their posts. Thus the generals of Moawiyah, without the least difficulty, became masters of the chief towns in that province, and in particular of Mecca and Medina, whose inhabitants were forced to take the oath of allegiance to Moawiyah.

His troops ravage Yemen.

The Syrian troops having made preparations to invade the province of Yemen, Abidallah, governor of that country, marched out against them with all the forces he could raise, in hopes of beating them on the frontiers, and preventing them from entering the province ; but the success did not answer his expectations: his troops were broke, and totally routed ; and he was forced to save himself by flight. Having, in his confusion, left behind him two of his sons, who were very young, they fell into the hands of the Syrians, who put them both to a very cruel death.

Arabian historians relate, that Ali was so greatly affected with the unhappy fate of those two children, that he cursed the author of so great an outrage, and begged of God to deprive him of sense and reason. And they add, that Arthah (for so the general of Moawiyah, who had been guilty of that cruelty, was called) in a few years actually became a madman, and at last died in a fit of rage and despair.

At

At the time the Syrians were in Yemen, Ali sent thither four thousand horse, under the conduct of a captain, named Jariah, to pursue Arthah. But this succour was of no use to the inhabitants of the country; for so soon as the enemy had entered it, they plundered it from one end to the other with the utmost expedition, and retired with great precipitation; insomuch that they were returned to their own country by the time Jariah reached Yemen.

ALI.
Hegyra 40.
Ch. ar. 660.

Amidst these misfortunes a new calamity befel Ali, which the more sensibly afflicted him, as it was caused by his own brother. Okail, for that was the Mussulman's name, was so base to abandon Ali, and join Moawiyah, who received him with open arms, and assigned him a great revenue. Okail alledged no other reason for his desertion, but that his brother had not maintained him suitably to his rank.

Okail goes
over to Moa-
wiyah.

At this very time a conspiracy was formed with intent to destroy the two competitors for the Caliphate and Amru. The project was contrived by three of the Karegites, (men most zealous for the advancement of their sect) who being met together at Mecca, fell into discourse on the battle of Naharwan, in which four thousand of their brethren lost their lives.

After having exalted the merit, and bewailed the loss, of those who were killed in that battle, they debated amongst themselves

A conspiracy
to kill Ali,
Moawiyah,
and Amru.

Ali.
Hegyra 40.
Ch. ar. 660.

what had occasioned those intestine divisions which had so long rent the state; and having unanimously agreed that Ali, Moawiyah, and Amru were the sole authors of them, they resolved to dispatch them all, being firmly persuaded that on the death of those three persons, whom they called erroneous Imams, their country would be restored to its usual tranquillity.

These Karegites were called Abdalrahman-ebn-Melgem, Barak-ebn-Abdallah, and Amru-ebn-Beker. And after having held several conferences, the first of them undertook to go to Cufah, and give a good account of Ali; the second engaged to do the same in regard to Moawiyah; and the third promised to make away with Amru.

These three men having thus resolved to execute their design, pitched upon the time of the solemn assembly of the Mussulmen at Mecca, when they might be sure the chiefs would not be from home, and would be more slenderly accompanied than usual. The conspirators, with a view to secure the success of the enterprize, poisoned their swords; after which each man went his way towards that place where he was to strike his blow.

Moawiyah is
wounded, but
recovers.

Barak arriving at Damascus, gained admittance as one of Moawiyah's retinue; and on the appointed day, perceiving a favourable opportunity, he smote him in the reins. This event threw the courtiers into the greatest consternation;

confertation ; but the wound was not mortal ;
and though the sword was poisoned, he had
such speedy and effectual assistance, that in a
short time he was perfectly cured.

ALI.

Hegyra 40.
Ch. 21. 660.

It is related that the surgeon who was called in to dress him, having searched and considered the wound, gave him his choice either to have it cauterized, or to drink a potion that would render him incapable of generation. Moawiyah without hesitation chose the latter, and had no other children than such as were born previous to his assassination.

As to the assassin he was immediately seized, for he neither strove to conceal or defend himself, but readily confessed the plot with such an unconcern as amazed those who were appointed to examine him. He was condemned to have his hands and feet cut off ; after which, further punishment was inflicted on him, and it is said he survived the loss of his limbs many years, and was married*.

Punishment of
the assassin.

Amru-ebn-Beker, who had undertaken to assassinate Amru-ebn-al-As, missed his blow by an accident. For the latter having been seized with a violent cholick on the day fixed for his assassination, did not go to the mosque

Amru escapes
by a mistake
of the assassin.

* It is related that one of Moawiyah's friends, hearing in what manner Barak had been punished, and that he had taken a wife, said, it was by no means reasonable that the assassin, who had prevented Moawiyah from having children, should have any of his own, and that he killed him with his own hand. Ockley's History of the Saracens vol. II. fol. 74.

ALI.
Hegyra 40.
Ch. ær. 660.

to perform the office, but sent one of his friends, whom he desired to officiate in his stead. The assassin not knowing him, and mistaking him for Amru, gave him a wound, of which he dropped down dead. The murderer, who did not fly the place, was immediately seized, and being informed that he had killed Charijah, he said, without the least concern, "I designed Amru, but God designed another."

Abdalrahman enters into a league with a woman, who encourages him in his design to kill Ali.

The third of these conspirators, Abdalrahman, was more successful in the execution of his wicked designs against Ali, than his two companions; for being arrived at Cufah, he hired lodgings at the house of a woman whose nearest relations had been killed at the battle of Naharwan, and who on that account entertained a violent inclination of being revenged on the Caliph. Abdalrahman having met with an opportunity of founding her inclinations, which he found quite favourable to his designs, frankly confessed to her that he was come thither with a full resolution to rid them of the author of their misfortunes.

The woman, pleased at this resolution, promised him her utmost assistance. Abdalrahman, with a view to fix her more firmly in his interest, made her an overture of marriage. She did not much decline the offer, but answered, that she required of the man who proposed to take her to wife three things as a dowry; namely, three thousand drachmas of silver,

silver, a slave of each sex, and Ali's head. Abdalrahman instantly accepted the conditions, and at the time appointed for executing his design, he joined with him two other men, named Darwan and Shabib, to bear him company, and assist him in case of need.

ALI.
Hegyta 40.
Ch. xx. 660.

It is said that Ali, during all the month of Ramadan, in which he was killed, had frequent presages of his death, and had more than once dropped words to that purpose, when he was in private with his friends. It was visible to all about him that he was overwhelmed with the deepest melancholy, and that he had great inward conflicts. He frequently talked to himself, and was once overheard to say, "Alas! my heart, there is need of patience, for there is no remedy against death."

Ali's presages
of his ap-
proaching
death.

On that day which was to terminate the life of the unfortunate Caliph, he left his house early in the morning to go to the mosque. As he crossed his court-yard, a great number of domestic birds uttered loud cries, which being observed by one of his slaves, he threw a stick at them to make them quiet, but the Caliph said to him, "Let them alone, for their cries are only lamentations foreboding my death."

The three assassins waited for Ali at the door of the mosque, and as he was ready to enter, they feigned a quarrel amongst themselves, and drew their swords. Darwan made a stroke at Ali, but missed him, and the blow

He is assassi-
nated.

ALI.
Hegyra 40.
Ch. æt. 660.

blow fell on the gate of the mosque. Abdalrahman struck him on the head, in the very place where he had before received a wound at the battle of Ahzab, which was fought in Mahomet's time, and the stroke was mortal.

Two of his
murderers are
taken, and
punished.

The blow given, the three villains fled without being apprehended. Darwan crept home, where he was killed by a person who had seen him with his sword drawn against Ali, and Shabib ran away with so much speed, that he escaped, and was never taken.

As to Abdalrahman, he seemed at first terrified at the thoughts of the crime he had committed, and strove to conceal himself in a corner of the mosque, but he was soon found with his sword drawn. For some time that assassin stoutly denied the fact, but he shortly afterwards openly confessed it, and was brought before Ali, who delivered him into the custody of his eldest son Hassan, with orders to let him want for nothing, and that if he died of his wound, the murderer should not be put to a painful and lingering death, but should be executed at one blow. Ali died about the fifth day after he was wounded, and Ali's commands were punctually executed*.

As

* This is the account given by D'Herbelot of the death of that assassin, which he probably took from Persian authors. But Tabari and Abulpheda, authors of great note amongst the Arabians, relate it in a very different manner. Abulpheda says that his hand was first cut off, and then his foot on the opposite side: that next they put out his eyes with a red hot iron, then cut out his tongue, and afterwards burned him;

to

As to the Caliph's person, he had a very red face, large eyes, a prominent belly; his head was bald, but his beard thick, and his breast hairy. His physiognomy was pleasing, florid, and youthful, and his countenance was usually covered with a smile.

ALI.

Hegyra 40.
Ch. 2r. 660.

Description of
Ali's person.

Amongst the surnames or honourable titles which the Mussulmen bestow on Ali, there are two principal ones, to wit, Wafi, and Mortada, or Mortadi.* The first of which signifies in Arabic, legatee, mandatary, executor of a man's will, and heir, that is of Mahomet. The other means, beloved by, or acceptable to God; and even in his life time they called him Efed-Allâh-Algalib, the victorious lion of God. His followers have also given him other titles; the Shiites in particular (who might be called his adorers) call him Faid-al-Anwar, the distributor of lights or graces; and in Persian, Shah Mordman, or the king of men.

Titles be-
stowed on the
Caliph.

However, these great eulogies did not prevent his name, and that of all his family,

to which he adds, the curse of God be upon him. The account given by Abulpheda seems much the more probable, considering the heinousness of the crime, and the temper of that people. For though it is not impossible that Ali might give such orders, yet it is scarce credible that they were so mercifully executed: but after what manner soever he was put to death, the hereticks consider him as a martyr.

Ockley's History of the Saracens. vol. II. fol. 78.

* From whence European travellers have corruptly called him Mortis Ali, which the readers have mistaken for his name. Ockley vol. II. fol. 81,

from

ALI.
Hegyra 40.
Ch. 2r. 66o.

from being cursed, and their persons excommunicated in all the mosques of the empire, under the dominion of the house of Ommiyah, from Moawiyah to the time of Omar-ebn-Abdalaziz (the eight Caliph of that family) who suppressed this solemn malediction.

There were also some other Caliphs of the race of Abbas, who expressed a great aversion to Ali, and all his posterity*. On the contrary, the Fatemite Caliphs of Egypt caused his name to be joined with that of Mahomet, in the publication of the times of prayer, which they made from the minarets of their mosques.

Place of Ali's
sepulchre.

Ali was buried near Cusah, and it is said that his sepulchre was kept hid during the reign of all the princes of the house of Ommiyah, and that it was not discovered till the reign of the Abbassians, which is scarce credible. However, in the year of the Hegyra 376. A. C. 977, Samsam Aldoulat, a prince of the race of the Buians, who reigned at Bagdat under the Caliph Thaï, built a sumptuous monument over it, which the Persians generally call Kunbud-Faid-Alanwar, the dome of the dispenser of lights and graces. And though the tomb of Ali is so well known to be near Cusah, yet some of his sect believe him to be still alive, and affirm that he will

* Namely, Motaded, and Motawakel, to whom they say he appeared in a dream, and threatened them with his indignation.

come at the end of the world, and fill ~~the~~ ^{ALI.} the earth with justice. Others are so extravagant as to make him a divine person. ^{Hegyra 40.} The more moderate, indeed, say that he is ^{Ch. 22. 660.} not truly God, but that in many things he partakes of the divine nature.

Ali is held in great reputation for wisdom amongst all the Mahometans. There is extant of his writing a centiloquium, or a hundred sentences *, which have been translated from the Arabic into Turkish and Persian, and the other languages of Upper Asia. But the most celebrated piece is intituled *Jesrwe-Jame*: it is written upon parchment in mysterious characters, intermixed with figures, wherein are said to be contained all the important events that have happened or shall happen from the beginning of Mussulmanism to the end of the world. Jaafer Sadec has deciphered (in some manner) a part of this parchment, (which is deposited in the hands of Ali's family.) As to the entire explication of it, that in their opinion is reserved for the 12th Imam, who is surnamed, by way of excellence, the Mohdi, or Grand Director. This Imam hath appeared amongst them: but they believe that God, having taking him under his protection at the time he was persecuted by the Caliphs of Bagdat, carried him

Works of which Ali was the author.

* There is likewise a collection of verses under the title of *Anwar Alokail*, and in the bodleian library is a large book of his sentences.

ALI.
Hegyra 40.
Ch. xx. 660.

away into a place unknown to them, and that he will not return till the last day, in order to bring the whole world to embrace Mahometism.

Maxims of
Ali.

Besides the books we have mentioned, we find in authors many sentences and apophthegms under the name of Ali, which are full of good sense and instruction, and clearly manifest the rectitude of his heart.

The author of Rabi Alakyar quotes the following, which is one of the most instructive; "He that would be rich without means, powerful without subjects, and subject without a master, let him serve God, and he will find these three things."

He one day made a reply, which might have been sufficient to have silenced all such as reproached him on account of the feuds and divisions which had prevailed in the state from the beginning of his reign. One of his captains having pertly asked him, why the reigns of Abubecre and Omar, his predecessors, were so peaceable, and the reign of Othman and his own were so full of troubles; Ali wisely answered, "The reason is plain; Othman and I served Abubecre and Omar, during their reigns: and Othman and I had none to serve us but you, and such as are like you."

There is also another maxim of Ali (in the book intitled Rabi Alakyar) which strikes at the conduct of those who, from a spirit of party, in the sequel formed the sect of Ali.

Those

Those sectaries, to distinguish themselves from the rest of the Mussulmen, wore a turban of a different colour and particular fashion, and also traced their hair after a manner quite different from the rest of the disciples of Mahomet. "Take great care," said he, "never to separate yourselves from the fellowship of the other Mussulmen; for he that separates himself from them, belongs to the devil, as the sheep that leave the flock belong to the wolf; therefore give no quarter to him that marcheth under the standard of schism, though he hath my turban on his head, for he carries with him the infallible mark of a man that is out of the right way."

ALI.
Hegyra 40.
Ch. ær. 660.

This sentence manifestly condemns those who vaunt themselves for being of his sect, such as are the Persians at this time, some of the princes of the Usbecks, beyond the river Gihon, and several mighty monarchs in the Indies; who, by putting on Ali's turban, have separated themselves from the rest of the Mussulmen.

Hosain Waez also recites this passage of Ali, in his paraphrase and commentary upon the Alcoran; "God hath given to men two Imams, that is to say two pontiffs, or mediators between him and them: the first is the prophet, who is gone and is no more amongst them; the second which remains, and shall continue always with them, is prayer, which they make to obtain pardon of sins."

These

ALI.
Hegyra 40.
Ch. ær. 660.

These sectaries mutually bestow on each other the name of Shiites*, which properly signifies a scandalous reprobate sect; but it hath been particularly applied to the sectaries of Ali, who have from time to time raised great disturbances in the mussulman empire, in order to set on the throne the descendants of that Caliph, to whom alone they assert the throne of right belongs. Of this frequent examples will hereafter appear, when we treat of the dynasties which they have formed, under the several denominations of Alians, Fatimites, Edrissites, and Ishmaelites.

Ali, as it has been mentioned in the life of Mahomet, married Fatima, the daughter of that prophet. After her death he had several other wives, among whom he had fifteen sons and eighteen daughters. Fatimah brought him three sons, to wit, Hassan, Hossain and Mohassan, the latter of whom died in his infancy. The two former (as well as Ben Haniphiah, Abbas, and Amru, his children by other wives) left posterity behind them, and Hassan and Hossain, and their descendants, are remarkable in the mussulman history, on account of the eminent persons they produced, and the revolutions they occasioned in the several ages of Mahometism.

* The Arabians who call themselves Sonnites, that is, observers of the tradition and orthodox, do not allow the name, but call themselves Medheb; that is, a sect which follows approved opinions: and the sect of Ali call themselves Adâliyah, which signifies the religion of them that follow justice, and the right side. Ockley vol. II. page. 88.

H A S S A N.

The F I F T H C A L I P H.

HA S S A N, eldest son of the late Caliph, was unanimously chosen to succeed his father. So soon as Ali's friends perceived his wound to be mortal, they would have prevailed on him to name a successor; but, besides the reasons he might have not to nominate any person to a dignity, in the possession of which he had met with so many difficulties and crosses, he was resolved to follow the example of the prophet, and not to name a person to succeed him. This resolution he imparted to his friends, and told them, that into the hands of the people he resigned the power of appointing a ruler, whose reign he hoped would be more undisturbed than his had been.

Hegyra 40.
Ch. 2r. 660.
Ali refuses to
name a suc-
cessor.

Hassan having been thus appointed Caliph without opposition, the people swore fealty to him, after he had taken an oath to stand by the Koran, and the tradition of the apostle. But how great soever his satisfaction might be to ascend the throne by so universal a consent of the people, yet he soon experienced that he was very unfit to bear with dignity the weight of a crown.

Hassan chosen
Caliph.

So mild and peaceable was his disposition, that he had an aversion to all noise and tumult,

Character of
Hassan,

HASSAN.
Hegyra 40.
Ch. ar. 660.

mult, and in particular to those of war. And as he rather inherited his father's piety than his valour, so he seemed fitter for a mosque, than the command of an army.

He marches
against Moa-
wiyah.

However he was soon forced to take up arms, on the entreaties of his subjects, who earnestly required that the war with Moawiyah should be renewed. He therefore began his march towards Syria at the head of a strong army, preceeded by twelve thousand men under Kais, whom he appointed to command them.

Moawiyah having also taken the field, marched out to meet the Caliph. Kais with his twelve thousand soldiers (though greatly inferior in number to the troops of Moawiyah) acted with so much prudence and conduct as to keep the enemy at bay, without risking a battle; and some smart skirmishes having passed, Kais strongly intrenched himself, and quietly waited the arrival of the main army.

A tumult in
his army.

In a short time Hassan joined him, and preparations were made to attack the Syrians. But one of the Caliph's men having been murdered in that juncture, and he proposing to punish the offenders, the troops mutinied, and the officers engaged in the dispute: In a word, they came to extremities even in the Caliph's presence; and so greatly were they wanting in respect both to his person and dignity, that they violently threw him from his seat, and it was with difficulty he escaped, after having received a wound.

This

This accident having happened near Ma-
 daen, (whither he had brought his army) the Caliph retired to the castle there, to se-
 cure himself from the fury of the mutineers. But that step had like to have been fatal to
 him : the governor's nephew strongly incited
 his uncle to take away the Caliph's life, but
 he would not hear of so base a proposal.
 The nephew would then have prevailed on
 him at least to take Hassan prisoner, and send
 him bound to Moawiyah ; but this he also
 generously refused, urging the sacred laws of
 hospitality, the laws of honour, in a word,
 how shameful a thing it would be, so to be-
 tray the son of the daughter of God's apostle.
 He therefore declared that he would not
 only leave the Caliph at liberty, but also pro-
 cure him all the comforts and conveniencies
 in his power.

The mind of Hassan was filled with dis-
 quietude. The insolence of his troops, the
 contempt they would shew for him should
 he leave the insult unpunished, the danger
 he foresaw in inflicting punishment on the
 guilty, and moreover the great dislike he had
 to continuing a war, the first events of which
 had proved so unprosperous to him, con-
 spired to make him form a resolution of ab-
 dicating a dignity which he had never been
 ambitious of obtaining, and in defence of
 which he had not the least inclination to sa-
 crifice his quiet, and much less to expose his
 life to the hazard of war.

HASSAN.

Hegyra. 41.
Ch. ær. 661.

The Caliph
flies to Ma-
daen.

Hassan re-
solves to ab-
dicate.

HASSAN.
Hegyra 41.
Ch. xiv. 661.

Hossein, his youngest brother, to whom he communicated his design, used his utmost endeavours to prevent him from carrying it into execution: but though he remonstrated to him the great disparagement and reflection it would cast on the memory of their father, Hassan persisted in his resolution. He foresaw that by a voluntary abdication, he should make a friend of Moawiyah, who out of gratitude would not fail amply to reward him for making so considerable a sacrifice, which would enable him to pass a quiet easy life in some obscure corner, a condition well besitting a man, who had neither courage nor ambition.

Moawiyah, who had spies even in the Caliph's court, was soon made acquainted with Hassan's design; and for that reason he ordered his generals to make no attempt on the Caliph's army, but to keep on the defensive. In the mean time he set his emissaries to work, who so artfully managed the intrigue, that the treaty was concluded before it was publicly known to be in agitation.

Conditions
required by
Hassan of
Moawiyah
in return for
the surrender-
ing up the
Caliphate to
him.

Hassan having thus fixed his resolution, wrote to Moawiyah; he informed him that the grief he felt to see the faithful Mussulmen exposed to the calamities of a civil war, he was induced to put an end to the dispute by sacrificing his own interest; that he was determined to resign the throne, and that in order to prevent a continu-
ance

ance of the war, which might happen from the attempts of a new rival, he had resolved to resign it into his hands. He added, that as so valuable a present merited some grateful return, he had three conditions to require of him; first, that Moawiyah should give him all the money in the treasury of Cufah; secondly, a considerable estate in Persia; and thirdly, that Moawiyah should make no reproachful reflection upon his father Ali.

HASSAN.
Hegyra 41.
Ch. 27. 661.

As Moawiyah could not pay too dear for an abdication so advantageous to him, he readily granted the conditions*, and a treaty was forthwith drawn up, which was signed by both parties. This being done, Moawiyah and Hassan went together to Cufah, where the ceremony of the abdication was to be performed.

A general assembly of the people was appointed to be held in the chief mosque, when Hassan having mounted the pulpit, and given praise and glory to God for inspiring him with the means of restoring peace to the Mussulmen, expressed himself in the following terms: "Moawiyah contended with me touching the Caliphate, to which I had a greater right than he; but I chose rather to surrender it to him, and thereby spare the effusion of mussulman blood. The world is

Hassan abdicates the Caliphate.

* It is said that Moawiyah refused to grant the third article; upon which Hassan requested that he would at least forbear to make such reflections in his hearing; which Moawiyah promised, but did not perform. Ockley's History of the Saracenis. vol. II fol. 95.

HASSAN. liable to changes, and even this affair also hath
 Hegyrâ 41. a time prefixed for its duration*.”
 Ch. æt. 661.

These last words had like to have raised a quarrel. Moawiyah interrupted the Caliph, commanded him to sit down, and told him it was imprudent to give the people to understand that the step he was then taking might be productive of fresh disturbances.

The Cufians
 refuse to give
 the treasure to
 Hassan.

Hassan, passing over unnoticed this reproach of Moawiyah, coolly resumed his discourse, and closed it with informing the people that he had three things to lay to their charge: first, the murder of his father; secondly, the affronts offered to his own person; and thirdly, the robbing him of his goods. For though Moawiyah had promised him the treasure of Cufah, they refused to deliver it up to him, insisting that it was their property, and could not be alienated without their consent.

Moawiyah
 makes him
 amends.

This refusal of the Cufians was grievous to Hassan, and indeed Moawiyah could not but be highly dissatisfied with it. However he did not think fit in any manner to controvert their design. For as he was possessed of the

* It may be inferred from this account, that Hassan voluntarily made the above harangue. But Tabari El-Makin says, it was owing to a hint given to Moawiyah by Amru-ebn-Alas of the necessity of such a testimony of the abdication; which being importunately urged, Moawiyah consented to it against his own opinion, and some authors say he was so displeased with the close of Hassan's speech, that he severely chid Amru for pressing him to it, and others say he was never afterwards heartily reconciled to Amru.

Caliphate; which he had so long aimed at, his whole care was employed in establishing his power; and he freely assigned to Hassan a revenue of about three millions per annum; to which he from time to time added very valuable presents.

HASSAN,
Hegyra 41.
Ch. ær. 661.

Hassan departed from Cufah with Hossein his brother; they retired to Medina, where they led a private and retired life. However, Moawiyah strove to rouse them from their state of inactivity, when the Kharegites (those hereticks that gave Ali so much disturbance) took up arms against the new Caliph. He wrote to Hassan to march out against them, and to restrain them till he could bring up his army. But Hassan answered, that he had given over all public affairs in order to avoid war, and that if he had been inclined to fight at all, he should have made war against him.

Hassan and
his brother
retire to Me-
dina.

In this manner he passed seven or eight years, that is to say all the rest of his days, at Medina: he died in the forty-ninth year of the Hegyra, being but forty seven-years old. It is affirmed that his days were hastened by Moawiyah, who suborned his wife to poison him. It is also said he was induced to commit that crime, to get rid of a promise he had made to Hassan, that he would not name a successor during Hassan's life, and would refer the election to a certain number of persons whom Hassan was to appoint.

Hassan's
death.

HASSAN,
Hegira 41.
Ch. 2r. 661.

Moawiyah
subborns
Hassan's wife
to poison him.

When Moawiyah had fixed himself on the throne, he formed a resolution of making the Caliphate hereditary in his family, and of naming Yezid his son to be his successor; and in order to avoid the reproaches of Hassan on account of his breaking the conditions stipulated between them, he resolved to put an end to that prince's life. That he might be more sure of success, he practised with Hassan's wife, and so won her over to his interest by a feigned promise of marriage *, that she consented to poison her husband.

The blow struck, she required of Moawiyah a performance of his promise; but he treated her request with contempt, and offered her a large sum of money, which she accepted of, for her pains.

When the time of Hassan's death drew near, his brother, who perceived he was poisoned, earnestly begged he would inform him who had administered the deadly potion, and swore he would take suitable vengeance on him: but Hassan answered with great calmness, "O brother! the life of this world is made up of nights which speedily vanish away: let the guilty wretch alone, till he and I appear together before God."

He directed by his will that his body should be buried near Mahomet his grand-

* Ockley says that Hassan's wife was suborned by Yezid the son of Moawiyah, who promised her marriage; but when she had murdered her husband, he wisely refused to trust himself in her embraces,

father.

father. Aiesha at first consented to it, but finding that the whole family of Ommiyah opposed it, she afterwards retracted her consent: she declared that the house where Mahomet was buried was her property, and Hassan's body should not be laid there, so they laid him in the common burying place.

HASSAN.
Hegyra 41.
Ch. æt 661.

Aiesha will
not permit
Hassan to be
buried near
the prophet.

As his reign was of no longer duration than six months, or thereabouts, some authors have not reckoned him amongst the number of Caliphs. But I have followed Ebn-Athir, and other writers, who have not thought fit to omit him: for he actually enjoyed the supreme dignity, and though his reign was short, yet he was as much a Caliph as any of those who possessed the throne many years.

Hassan had many children *, the most famous of whom was Abdallah, whose posterity caused great disturbances in the Mussulman empire.

As to Houssein, his branch was chief of the sect of Ali, because it maintained possession of the office of Imam †, the principal ecclesiastical dignity among the Mussulmen. It is related of this Caliph, that a woman having once presented him with a bunch of fine

* Ockley says fifteen males and five females.—He adds, that his wives were all remarkably fond of him, though he frequently divorced them, and married others.

† Some amongst the sectaries of Ali drew the descent of the Imams from Abdallah, one of his children, who had a son named Yahia, but the Persians will have the succession to pass from Hassan to his brother Houssein.

Ockley vol. II. fol. 105.

HASSAN. herbs, he asked her if she was a free woman, she told him she was a slave, but that the present she had made him was rare and curious. Hassan gave her her liberty, and said to those present, "We have received this instruction from God himself, that we ought to return to those who give us gifts, something of more value than that which they give us". Meaning that this moral instruction is couched in the Koran, which the Mussulmen look on as the word of God.

They also relate a wonderful instance of his moderation. A slave having spilled a dish of scalding broth on him as he sat at table, instantly fell at his feet, and repeated these words of the Koran, "Paradise is open to those that govern their passion". Hassan answered, I am not in passion. The slave went on, "and to those who pardon offences"; I pardon yours, said Hassan. The slave went on to the end of the verse, which says: "God loves those above all who do good to such as have offended them". Hassan concluded: since it is so, I give you your liberty, and four hundred drachmas of silver.

The Mussulmen quote this sentence of Hassan; "The tears which are let fall through devotion, should not be wiped off, nor the water which remains upon the body after legal washing; because this water makes the face of the faithful shine, when they appear in the presence of God."

M O A-

M O A W I Y A H.

The S I X T H C A L I P H.

SO soon as Hassan had solemnly surrendered the Caliphate, Moawiyah took possession of that dignity, and rendered it hereditary in his family, whereas it was before him elective. In his person began the dynasty of the Ommiyans, so famous in the arabian history, which took its name from Ommiyah, who was great-grandfather to Moawiyah.

MOAWIYAH.

Hegyra 41.
Ch. ær. 661.Commence-
ment of the
Dynasties of
the Ommi-
yans.

The father of this Caliph was named Abu-Sofian, and was one of the chiefs of the noble tribe of the Coraischites, of which Mahomet was also. When that prophet took up arms in defence of his doctrine, the Coraischites who were extremely averse to it, took up arms also, and appointed Abu Sofian generalissimo of their forces.

That general signalized himself on several occasions ; but in spite of all his efforts, Mahomet was almost ever victorious. At last he was convinced of the truth of Mahomet's pretensions, and on the day of the famous victory of Bedre, he publicly embraced Mahometism.

The example of so considerable a profelyte had the greatest influence on the rest of the tribe, who, for the most part, became followers

MOAWIYAH. followers of Mahomet. It is related that Hegyra 41. Abu-Sofian after his conversion, begged Ch. æt. 661. three things of Mahomet. The first, that as he had commanded the forces of the Infidels against the possessors of the true religion, he might now (in order to expiate his crime) command the army of the Faithful against the Unbelievers. In the next place he requested that the prophet would appoint Moawiyah to be his secretary; and his third request was, that Mahomet would take to wife one of his daughters named Gafah. The two former petitions were granted, but Mahomet excused himself, and declined granting the last; alledging some reason, (which the arabian author has not mentioned) why he could not legally comply with his request. Abu-Sofian was accordingly appointed commander of the troops, and Moawiyah to be Mahomet's secretary, in which post he continued many years.

After the death of his father, Moawiyah gained so great a reputation under the Caliphs, Mahomet's successors, that on the conquest of Syria, he was appointed governor of that province; and during his government he gained so many friends, and raised his power to so high a pitch, that at last he caused himself to be proclaimed Caliph in a most irregular and unconstitutional manner. By means of his consummate bravery and policy, he removed every obstacle in his way to the throne, and, spight of the utmost efforts

efforts of his enemies, he prevented any ill effects that might have resulted from the insufficiency of his election. MOAWIYAH. Hegyra 41. Ch. ær. 661.

The beginning of his reign was disturbed by an insurrection of the Kharegites, who were, as we have already observed, declared enemies to all subordination; and who were not properly dealt with at their rise. Ali had indeed beat them; but had not effectually rooted them out. And as the weak conduct of the last Caliph was by no means calculated to render him formidable, they were inspired with a fresh inclination to take up arms against the government. Hegyra 42. Ch. ær. 662. A new insurrection of the Kharegites.

Moawiyah, unwilling to fall into the same fault which his predecessor had committed, made the most speedy preparations to reduce a party, who so openly defied his authority, and sent the Syrians out against them. But the success did not answer his expectations; the Syrians were defeated in several actions, and the Kharegites became more insolent, and were more to be feared.

Upon this the Caliph had recourse to the inhabitants of Cufah, and the people of Irak, and intreated them to give a proof of their sincerity and obedience to him, by opposing a set of wretches who set at nought all law and religion, and who, being under no restraint, had made war against them without the least pretext, and might one day become masters of their country. Moawiyah prevails on the inhabitants of Cufah and Irak to take up arms against the Kharegites.

These

MOAWIYAH.

Hegyra 42.

Chr. ær. 662.

These remonstrances had the desired effect.

The Cufians and Irakians took up arms, and marched out in battle-array against the Kharegites. The latter, reflecting that the junction of those troops with the Syrians would form too powerful a party to be resisted, made some attempts to prevail on them to remain neuter; and as they knew that the greatest part of them had acknowledged Moawiyah from no other motive than the hopes of extinguishing the flames of civil war, and that they in no wise approved the manner in which he raised himself to the throne, they sent to them a deputy, who took a very artful method to persuade them that it would be most prudent and advantageous for them, not to engage in the war they had declared against Moawiyah.

After many conferences had been held, the Kharegite deputy told them, that considering their opinion of things, no prejudice could ensue to them by their not engaging in the dispute: "For", said he, "is not Moawiyah our common enemy? let us therefore make war upon him: if we kill him, you are rid of a tyrant, and if he destroys us, you will be free from all disquietude on our account".

The Kharegites are totally defeated.

The Irakians refused to lend an ear to the advice of the Kharegites; they thought it a matter of the utmost importance, and the business of every rational man, to join in the destruction of a sect who strove to be independant of law, religion and society.

They

They therefore furiously attacked them; and after several actions, in which each party gave the most signal proofs of valour, at last a bloody battle was fought, which decided the fate of the Kharegites. The Irakians gained a compleat victory, and the opposite party was almost totally exterminated.

MOAWIYAH.
Hegyra 42.
Chr. ær. 662.

After the destruction of this sect, Arabia for some time enjoyed a calm. However, little is to be met with in history, worth observation, from the time of that battle to the forty-third year of the Hegyra. And even that year is remarkable only on account of the death of the famous Amru-ebn-al-As, so renowned for his courage and skill in the art of war. He was one of the first heroes of Mussulmanism; and Mahomet used to say of him, (as tradition goes) "That there was no truer mussulman, nor none more stedfast in the faith, than Amru."

Hegyra 43.
Chr. ær. 663.
Death of
Amru.

He was justly celebrated by historians on account of the quickness of his natural parts, his valour, his capacity, and his exploits in Egypt; even the misfortunes he underwent furnished the writers of those days with a subject for eulogiums. He died in his government of Egypt * in which he was con-

* Amru was sent by Omar into Egypt, which he conquered, and was made governor thereof. Othman continued him in that post four years, and then dismissed him: upon which he retired, and led a private life in Palestine. After Othman's death, he went over to Moawiyah on his invitation, and had (as has been already related) a considerable share in the controversy between Ali and Moawiyah.

tinued

MOAWIYAH. continued by Moawiyah, together with ^{the} possession and property of all the revenues of that opulent province, on condition only of maintaining, at his proper expence, a sufficient body of troops, for defence of the country.

Hegyta 43.
Ch. ar. 663.

Besides those qualities which bespeak a great general, Amru possessed others which gained him great credit and esteem amongst his countrymen. He greatly excelled in eloquence and poetry. Before he embraced Mahometism, he wrote a satirical lampoon against Mahomet. This step he afterwards greatly regretted, and even at the time of his death, he made a very pathetic and masculine discourse to his children, in which he laments his having exercised his wits in exposing the prophet.

Rise of Ziyâd.

About this time Moawiyah formed a resolution of acknowledging publicly as his brother, a Mussulman, a person of merit, named Ziyâd, who had distinguished himself amongst the Arabians for his abilities, masterly eloquence, and military exploits. He was the son of Abu-Sofian as well as Moawiyah, but as his birth was illegitimate, Abu-Sofian had not owned him *; for which reason they gave him the name of Ziyâd-ben-Abihi, that is to say, the son of an unknown person.

He gave early proofs of what he would one day be. Amru, who was a very good

* It is said, he durst not own him for fear of Omar's severity.

judge of mankind, having once heard him MOAWIYAH.
 speak in an assembly of the companions of Hegyra 43.
 the prophet, with great force and solidity, Chr. ær. 663.
 took much notice of him, and publickly said,
 that had he been of the tribe of the Cora-
 ischites, he would be fit to govern the Ara-
 bians.

The Caliphs whom he served did not fail
 to reward his merit. He above all other
 things distinguished himself on account of
 his conduct in Persia, at the time he was
 employed by Ali to transact some public af-
 fairs in that extensive province; in the ma-
 nagement of which he shewed himself to be
 master of such rare talents, as soon acquired
 him the greatest reputation.

When Hassan abdicated the Caliphate, Zi- He sides with
 yad absolutely refused to acknowledge Moa- the Alians.
 wiyah, though he was his natural brother.
 The regard he bore to the memory of Ali,
 his benefactor, induced him to slight the
 new Caliph, and to join the party of the
 Alians.

Moawiyah, who was throughly sensible of Moawiyah
 Ziyad's merit, was grieved to think how pre- gains him to
 judicial an enemy of his abilities must prove his side.
 to his party. He therefore resolved to se-
 cure him in his interest, and imparted his
 design to Mogeirah-ebn-Said, governor of
 Cufah, who readily offered his service to
 bring over Ziyad from the party of the
 Alians: and Mogeirah was the more likely
 to succeed, as he had kept up a correspon-
 dence

MOAWIYAH. dence with Ziyad, from the time he
 Hegyra 43. had done him a piece of service in a matter
 Ch. ær. 663. of great consequence *.

Mogeirah made so good use of his friendship with Ziyad, and offered him such advantageous terms, that at last they prevailed on him to join Moawiyah, and acknowledge him as Caliph. He was received at court with all possible marks of esteem and respect, and his brother assured him that he would soon put him in a condition of occupying the chief posts of the state, without the least fear of being for the future reproached with the baseness of his original.

He acknowledges him for his brother.

In consequence of this promise he caused proper witnesses to be examined in an assembly of the people, to prove that Ziyad was his brother by the father's side †, and after a solemn and formal enquiry it was openly declared that he was the real son of Abu-

* Mogeirah was accused of committing adultery. Ziyad, who was then Cadi or judge of the place where the crime was committed, either through favour, or for want of legal proof, found means to acquit him, and caused the witnesses to be severely scourged as calumniators. See Sale's Translation of the Koran, chap. 24th, entitled Light, fol. 287.

† The purport of the evidence was, that Abu-Sofian in the days of ignorance, before drinking of wine was made a sin by the Koran, travelling in Thayef, refreshed himself at a public house, where he lay with Ziyad's mother, then married to a Greek slave. The old man that kept the house was alive, and gave evidence touching the conversation of Abu-Sofian with Somyah; and his evidence was so strong, that it would have amounted to a sufficient proof in a case of impotency.

Ockley, vol. II. p. 114.

Sofian;

Sofian; and Moawiyah acknowledged him to be his own brother, sprung as well as himself from the noble blood of the Coraischites, and consequently capable of enjoying the chief posts in the state *.

MOAWIYAH.
Hegyra 43.
Ch. ær. 663.

Moawiyah's relations were greatly disgusted at and bitterly complained of this step, which at the same time that it procured to Ziyad much greater honour and advantages than he could otherwise have expected, had brought on an enquiry highly disadvantageous to the character of old Abu-Sofian, (who had lived and died with a good reputation) as well as a disparagement on the whole family.

Moawiyah disregarded the murmurs and complaints that were uttered on this account, and thought only of usefully employing the great talents of Ziyad for the good of the state and the advancement of his own interest.

He immediately appointed Ziyad to be governor of Baforah, whither it was necessary to send without delay some person of resolution and ability, who, by a due exertion of his authority, might put a stop to the disorders that had long reigned there.

Hegyra 44.
Ch. ær. 664.
Ziyad is made
governor of
Baforah.

* It was observed by Abulpheda, that this was the first time the Koran was openly violated in a judicial way of proceeding; for the child belonged to his legal father, the Greek slave that married his mother: And Mahomet has left it as a decision in such cases, "The child to the blankets, and the whore to the stone;" meaning, that the child should be brought up, and the whore stoned.

H 2

Abdollah-

MOAWIYAH. Abdallah-ebn-Amer had been lately removed from the government of that city, because through too great a mildness and gentleness of disposition, he had suffered the country to be quite over-run with thieves and murderers. The Caliph sent in his room Hareth, who made some attempts to remedy the evils caused by Abdallah's lenity; but they had taken so deep root, that he could not possibly pluck them up. At last Ziyad was sent, as the most likely man to draw the sword, and chastise their insolence with exemplary punishments.

He disperses the robbers that infested the city and its neighbourhood. When he arrived at Basorah, things were in such a condition that it was not safe to walk the streets, especially in the night-time, which was full of tumult and bloodshed. He therefore called a general assembly of the people, and in a severe speech * gave them to understand, that he was provided of the proper remedies to put an end to the insolent crimes which were continually committed there; but before he administered them, he was willing to inform those who were guilty, that they would do well to quit the city forthwith, for he would not spare one that fell into his hands.

* Ziyad had an excellent talent at speaking in public, being reckoned the best orator next to Ali, who had not his equal. One of the polite arabians used to say, that he never heard a man speak well, but he wished he would have done, being in pain for him lest he should flag, and injure himself by speaking worse, Ziyad only excepted, for the more he spoke, the more he excelled.

He

He next published an order, forbidding all persons, of what quality soever, to appear in the streets or any public place after the hour of evening-prayer, on pain of death: and that his orders might be put in execution, he appointed a strong guard to go the rounds, and put to death all they should find out of their houses after that hour.

MOAWIYAH.

Hegyra 44.
Chr. ær. 664.

This order might have been attended with inconveniencies, but as it was absolutely necessary that so great an evil should be remedied, it was rigorously put in execution. Two hundred persons were killed the first night; and this severe example made so strong an impression on the inhabitants, that scarce any person stirred out of his house after the limited time; however five were put to death the second night; but the third night passed with great tranquillity, and not a man suffered the penalty. Thus peace and safety was restored to the city, and thefts and robberies were no longer heard of.

Moawiyah was the better pleased to find that order was restored in Basorah, as he was apprehensive his enemies would take advantage of the tumult and confusion which prevailed there, to decry his government, or perhaps increase their party by sending some of their adherents for that purpose to the city. The severity, and at the same time the prudence of Ziyad's conduct in quelling the many disorders which he had found in

Hegyra 45.
Chr. ær. 665.
He quells
the disorders
in several provinces.

MOAW YIAH. Baforah, induced the Caliph to have recourse to him to bring about the same advantageous change in Sejestan and Chorasan, provinces of Persia, and in Bahrein and Amman, provinces of Arabia. The Caliph must have entertained a very high opinion of Ziyad's abilities, when he bestowed on him so many posts at a time, one of which alone would have found full employment for the common run of men.

Nor did the Caliph unadvisedly bestow these employments on him; for though it might be supposed that he would have been overwhelmed by a multiplicity of business, yet he was superior to it all: and the more they committed to his care, the lighter was to him the burthen of his government. He was neither savage or cruel in his temper, though he executed strict justice; he did every thing in his power to maintain order, peace and tranquillity amongst the people; but at the same time he governed in a despotic manner, and would not suffer the least slight of his authority, or disobedience to his commands.

An example of this appears from the conduct of Hakem-ben-Amer, a mussulman captain. That officer having been sent by Ziyad to take a place *, succeeded in the enterprize, killed a great number of the enemy, and brought off all the riches of the inhabitants; of which he immediately

* Called mount Ashal.

sent advice to the governor. And Ziyad sent him back word, that the emperor of the faithful had commanded that all the gold and silver coin belonging to the booty should be laid apart, that it might be put into the treasury.

MOAWIYAH
Hegyra 45.
Ch. ær. 605.

This order being contrary to a decisive rule in the * Koran, where it is said in express terms that only a fifth part of the spoil should be reserved for the treasury, and the rest be divided amongst the captors, Hakem did not think fit to obey †; but after having reserved the fifth part, according to the text, he distributed the residue amongst his troops. Ziyad having been informed of this step, sent a person to arrest Hakem, and would doubtless have inflicted an exemplary punish-

* The eighth chapter of the Koran intitled the spoils. This chapter was occasioned by the high disputes touching the division of the spoils taken at the battle of Bedre, between the young men who fought, and the old men who had staid under the ensigns, the former insisting they were entitled to the whole, and the latter that they ought to have a share; and to end the contention Mahomet pretended to have received orders from heaven to divide the booty amongst them equally, after taking out a fifth part for the treasury. See Sale's translation of the Koran, chap. 8. fol. 139.

† He sent Ziyad word that the authority of the book of God was superior to the emperor of the faithful's letter. For it is said, that though the heavens and the earth conspire together against a servant of God who puts his trust in him, he will find him a secure place of refuge, and a means of deliverance. Having divided the spoil according to the text, he expected no mercy, and said, O God! if I may find favour in thy sight, take me. His request was granted, and he died quickly after. Ockley's History of the Saracens, vol. II. fol. 119. 120.

MOAWIYAH. ment on him for his disobedience, had not
 Hegyra 45. death soon taken him away
 Ch. ær. 665.

To this firmness and resolution of Ziyad the Caliph was therefore indebted for the establishment of his authority in many cities of the mussulman empire. He had the same obligation to divers other commanders whom he set over other places: but we are unable to give an historical account of the events which must have passed during that time, since the arabian authors have afforded us no light in that respect*.

Hegyra 46.
 Ch. ær. 666.

Moawiyah
 causes Abdar-
 rahman, the
 son of Kha-
 led, to be put
 to death.

They have been full as sparing even in regard to Moawiyah himself; they pass over several years of his Caliphate, in which they scarce mention him, and what they say is very little worth notice. For example, all we know of him in the 46th year of the Hegyra is, that having entertained a jealousy of Abdarrahan, son of the famous Khaled, who (being no ways inferior to his father either in point of courage or conduct) had

* This year died Zeid the son of Thabet, one of Mahomet's secretaries when he dictated the Koran. He wrote that copy which was used by the Imans at the command of Othman. Zeid was a man of the greatest parts of any of the age. He learned the Hebrew language in fifteen days, so as to be able to read the books of the Jews. He learned the Persian of one of Cosroes's ambassadors in eighteen days: and he learned Æthiopick, Greek, and Coptic of one of Mahomet's slaves. He was fifteen years old at the battle of the ditch. He was a most pleasant and facetious man at home, and the most reserved abroad. Once he saw the people coming from prayers, and he hastened to get out of the way like one that did not care to be seen. He used to say, he that doth not reverence men, will not reverence God. Ockley, vol. II. p. 120.

gained

gained the hearts of the soldiery, Moawiyah tampered with a christian servant of his, under promise of a great reward *, to poison his master, who was then in Syria, whilst the Caliph was employed in an expedition against the Greeks. The conditions were punctually performed on both sides; but the slave did not long enjoy the reward of his perfidiousness. The son of Abdarrahan, who was also called Khaled, receiving information of his father's murder, went from Medina into Syria, and killed the assassin with his own hand. Upon this Moawiyah caused Khaled to be imprisoned, and did not set him at liberty till he had paid a pecuniary fine for the expiation of murder †.

MOAWIYAH.
Hegyre 46.
Ch. x. 666.

In a short time another event happened at Cufah, which made a great noise. Ziyad being at the mosque in that city, ascended the pulpit, and made a speech to the people, which lasted till the hour of prayer. A Mussulman named Hejer (who was the strictest man then living in all things relating to the exercise of his religion) arose in the midst of the assembly, and cried out Salah, to prayers, and began to chant them, even whilst Ziyad was speaking: upon which the latter was forced to come down and

Ziyad insulted by the inhabitants of Cufah.

* To remit his tribute, and give him the lieutenancy of Hems.

† This is a common practice in mahometan countries, particularly in Persia, where the relations of the deceased may take their choice, either to have the murderer put into their hands to be put to death; or else to accept a pecuniary satisfaction. Vide Sale's Koran, chap. II. fol. 21.

MOAWIYAH. join with them, for the whole congregation followed Hejer.

Hegyra 46.
Ch. æt. 666.

He informs
the Caliph of
it, and retires
to Basorah.

Ziyad at that time passed by the affront; but on his leaving the mosque he forthwith wrote a letter to Moawiyah, in which he aggravated the insult, informed the Caliph that Hejer was a man who paid no regard either to his sovereign, or those invested with his authority; that if he did not speedily take proper measures, the party of Ali would soon prevail in Cufah, and that Hejer was very capable of exciting the people to a revolt.

Upon this Ziyad forthwith retired to Basorah, to wait for the Caliph's answer, and left his lieutenant behind to manage public affairs in the best manner he could during his absence. But he soon received information that Hejer and some other inhabitants of Cufah had refused to acknowledge his deputy, and used to throw dust at him when he was in his pulpit.

He returns to
Cufah, to
seize the re-
bels.

This information obliged Ziyad to come back to Cufah; he had received the Caliph's orders to imprison Hejer and his adherents, and calling an assembly of the people, he mounted the pulpit, and made them a very severe speech. He told them, that the government had too long winked at their insolent and disobedient behaviour; and as they were daily trampling upon the Caliph's authority, by setting at nought and insulting his lieutenants, it was high time to inflict an exemplary

emply punishment on the guilty, and that he had received orders from the emperor of the faithful to see the same executed.

MOAWIYAH
Hegira 46.
Ch. ær. 666.

Hejer, who was a zealous friend to the Alians, was so enraged to hear Ziyad frequently give to Moawiyah the title of emperor of the faithful, that at last he cried out aloud in the assembly, " God curse thee, thou liest "; and at the same time he took up an handful of dust, and threw it in the governor's face.

Ziyad with great presence of mind contained his resentment; he coolly came down, went to prayers amongst the people, and quietly retired to the castle. The next day he sent a party to take and bring Hejer before him, but he, fearing what would happen, had called his friends about him and stood on his defence, and a smart skirmish ensued between them and Ziyad's soldiers; however they (who fought only with sticks and stones) could not long hold out against well-armed men; and several of the rebels having been put to the sword, the rest were intimidated, and Hejer with thirteen of his friends were taken, and being chained hands and feet, were sent to Moawiyah to be punished for having spoken reproachfully of the Caliph, affronted his Emir, (Ziyad) and affirmed that the government belonged of right to none but the family of Ali.

The Caliph called a council to deliberate on this affair, and opinions were divided.

Punishment
of the rebels.

All

МОАВИЯН. All agreed that Hejer was guilty, but they differed as to the manner of punishing him. **Hejra 46.** Some were for putting him to death; others **Ch. ar. 666.** were for banishing him and his adherents, and dispersing them through the several provinces of his extensive dominions. The former opinion prevailed, through the pressing instances of Ziyad, who in a letter he wrote to Moawiyah told him, that if he had any thoughts of preserving his authority in Irak, or of keeping that province, he must by no means think of using clemency on so important an occasion. He caused his letter to be backed by some of his friends at the Caliph's court, and the sentence of death was pronounced. The criminal's head was cut off*, and several of his adherents were executed at the same time: about six of them obtained their pardon on the solicitation of some of the chief men of the court, whom the Caliph could not deny†.

It

* When Hejer came near the place of execution he begged time to wash himself, which he always punctually performed; after which he said two short prayers, and rising up, said, had I been afraid of death, I could have made them longer; but when he saw his grave ready digged, his winding sheet spread out, and the executioner's sword drawn, he was observed to tremble. And being asked, if he had not said that he was not afraid, he answered, how is it possible to be unmoved at such a prospect? The executioner bid him stretch out his neck strait; he answered, he would not be assistant to his own death. Then his head was immediately struck off, his body was washed, and he was buried in his chains, according to his own directions.

Ockley, vol. II. fol. 126, 127.

† Aïsha sent a messenger to intercede for Hejer and the other criminals, but he arrived too late. When Moawiyah afterwards

It seems according to arabian authors, that ^{MOAWIYAH.} nothing passed in the 46th and 47th years of ^{Hegyra 46.} the Hegyra more remarkable than the pu- ^{Ch. ær. 666.} nishment of Hejer, and the poisoning the son of Khaled; for during all that time, and even for great part of the year 48, they re- ^{Hegyra 48.} late nothing worthy observation, either in ^{Ch. ær. 668.} respect to the general history of the Arabians, or to the Caliph in particular.

They had however surely ample materials ^{The Mussul-} to have worked upon, in giving an account of ^{men besiege} the preparations which Moawiyah made for ^{Constantino-} the siege of Constantinople, to which city ^{ple in vain.} he sent a numerous fleet towards the end of the year 48. One would think that an armament of such a kind would have been much more worthy the attention and inquiries of historians, than a number of insignificant things with which they have filled their works.

We therefore only know in general, that Moawiyah, who had formed a design of raising a fleet even whilst he was only governor of Syria, had vigorously endeavoured to carry that design into execution, so soon as he attained the Caliphate. When he thought himself in a condition of keeping the sea, he equipped a fleet, which he sent

afterwards visited Aïsha at Medina, she said to him from behind the curtain, what was become of your compassion when you killed Hejer and his companions? I lose that, mother, said he, when I am absent from such persons as you.

to

MOAWIYAH. to Constantinople under the command of his
 Hegyra 48. son Yezid.
 Ch. ær. 668.

Death of
 Abu Jiub.

They laid siege to the city, which was of long duration, and unsuccessful; and these are the only important particulars that authors have thought fit to relate of it. Instead of giving us a circumstantial account of so important an enterprize, and which was so long carried on as to have produced many great and important actions and events, they have been very particular in informing us, that three of the companions of Mahomet, notwithstanding their great age, went on that hazardous expedition; that the army suffered extreme hardships in their march, but were encouraged by a tradition, no less than a plenary indulgence; Mahomet having said, "The sins of the first army that takes the city of Cæsar * are forgiven." That a famous musliman captain (one of the companions and who was present with Mahomet at the battles of Bedre and Ohod) named Abu Jiub, was killed during the siege, and buried near the walls of the place †.

Hegyra 49.
 Ch. ær. 669.

Expedition of
 Yezid.

The author who gives the most circumstantial account of the attempt upon Constantinople, relates, that Yezid at the head of a strong army in a very short time took

* Jerusalem was then called the city of Cæsar.

† A mosque has been since raised over his tomb, which is held in such veneration by the turks, that to this very day the emperors of the Ottoman family go thither with great ceremony to have their swords girt on upon their accession to the throne.

away from the grecian emperor, Armenia and Natolia. He then passed the Hellespont, and laid siege to Constantinople, and that the Greeks took no care to prevent his approaches. That they contented themselves with appearing in a posture of defence upon the ramparts, and quietly suffered the Arabians to post and cover themselves in the neighbourhood of the city, the circumference and extent of which was so immense, that the mussulman troops could not compleatly invest it. That notwithstanding this disadvantage, the Grecians in no wise disturbed their tranquillity; and that the Saracens plowed and sowed the fields adjacent to the town and suburbs, and gathered in the harvest with the same facility they could have done in their own country. And that after having thus passed two years, they formed several attacks, in which they lost a great number of men, and finally raised the siege.

MOAWIYAH
Hegyra 49.
Ch. xx. 669.

During the time of that enterprize, great disturbances arose in Africa, the inhabitants whereof seemed inclined to throw off the mussulman yoke. They had submitted only through fear, and so soon as they found themselves at liberty, they returned to their old religion; but on the appearance of the saracen troops they again professed Mussulmanism.

Inconstancy
of the Afri-
cans.

Moawiyah appointed a man named Okbad, who was a person of great capacity, to be governor of the province of Africa, who at last,

Okbad con-
firms them in
Mahometism.

MOAWIYAH.
Hegyra 49.
Ch. ar. 669.

last, but not without trouble, fixed the inconstant genius of that people. After having fruitlessly used all the methods mercy and moderation could suggest, he resolved to make use of severity, and thereby gained his point. He caused a register to be kept of the names of all those who were the chief promoters of the changes in religion which so frequently happened in that province, and gave orders that they should be all put to the edge of the sword: and he at the same time issued a proclamation, importing, that for the future he would act with the same vigour against all such as should dare to abandon the religion of the prophet.

Hegyra 50.*
Ch. ar. 670.

He builds the
city of Kair-
wan.

The fears of death made a strong impression on the inhabitants of that country, but the better to prevent the ill effects of their inconstancy, and keep them in awe, he caused the city of Kairwan † to be built, which city afterwards became the capital of the province of Africa (properly so called.) For

* In the 50th year of the Hegyra died Mogeirah-ebn Saïd governor of Cufah. The plague had raged there, on which he retired, and the pestilence ceasing, he returned and died of it. — He was an active man, and of good parts. He lost an eye at the battle of Yermouk, or, as some say, by looking at an eclipse. He was accounted to be of the wrong party, and a chief of them. They reckon five elders on Ali's side; Mahomet, Ali, Fatima, Hassan, Hussein. Their opposites are, Abubecre, Omar, Moawiyah, Amru, and Mogeirah. This year also died Rahya, one of the earliest professors of Mahometism. Mahomet said, that of all men he ever saw, Rahya did most resemble the angel Gabriel.

† It was distanced from Carthage towards the north east thirty-three leagues, and twelve from the sea.

this

this purpose he chose a country very woody, and full of serpents and wild beasts, which had often done great mischief: besides, the woods had served as an asylum to the rebels during the time of their revolt; and the governor had been greatly retarded and perplexed in his march, when he pursued them. He therefore caused all the trees in the neighbourhood to be felled, and they proved of singular use to him in building the new city. There he fixed his residence, and it became the center of his jurisdiction, and it was soon considerable on account of its commerce, the number of its inhabitants, and the reputation it gained when the sciences flourished there.

MOAWIYAH.
Hegira 50:
Chr. ær. 670.

The Saracens also made use of it as a place of arms; there they deposited their riches, and also the booty they took from their enemies. And as it was remote from the sea, and bordering upon the desert, they were secure from the invasions of the grecian or roman navies; and indeed the governor had taken such precaution in fortifying both the coast and the avenues to the city, that no descent could have been made there with any prospect of success.

Whilst Okbad was establishing the government of Moawiyah in Africa, the famous Ziyad was employed in subduing the Alians in the several places committed to his charge. After having forced the Irakians to return to their duty and submit to the Caliph, he

Ziyad asks for
the govern-
ment of Ara-
bia.

MOAWIYAH. wrote a letter to him, to ask for the government of Arabia. The manner in which he expressed himself in his letter, plainly shews, that Irak was so well secured that there was no reason to fear any future disturbances, and that he could with the same facility secure the peace and tranquillity of the rest of Arabia. "My left hand, said he to the Caliph, is here employed in governing the people of Irak: in the mean time my right hand remains idle. Give it Arabia to govern, and it will give you a good account of it."

He dies in going to take possession of it.

Moawiyah, who was sensible of how much importance it was to him, to employ a man so capable of doing him service, immediately granted his request. The news of it being soon spread abroad, was not very pleasing to all that heard it. Amongst others, this nomination greatly alarmed the inhabitants of Medina, who were afraid of his rough and violent temper. One of them, named Abdollah-cbn-Zobeir, alluding to the expressions made use of by Ziyad in his letter to the Caliph, publicly uttered this prayer: "O God! satisfy this right hand which is idle and superfluous to Ziyad*." It is said that soon after this prayer Ziyad was seized with a pestilential ulcer in one of the fingers of his right hand, and that he died of it, as he

Hegyra 53.
Chr. ær. 672.

* There is in these words an elegant allusion to the name of Ziyad, which signifies in Arabic, abundant and superfluous.

was on the road going to to take possession of his government. Authors fix his death in the 53d year of the Hegyra, and the 672d of the Christian æra. MOAWIYAH.
Hegyra 53.
Chr. ær. 672,

The same year died the famous Giabalah-ebn-Aihan, the last king of the tribe of Gassan, who were arabian christians. He embraced Mussulmanism in the Caliphate of Omar; but quitted it on account of some differences he had with that Caliph, and remained amongst the Christians till his death. Death of Giabalah.

Moawiyah was sensibly touched at the loss of Ziyad: He was indebted to him for the establishment of his authority in all the provinces of the mussulman empire; and if any malcontents still remained, they dared not shew their heads. Hegyra 54.
Chr. ær. 673.

The Caliph finding himself in peaceable possession of his dignity, fixed his residence at Damascus. He thought this city was worthy of being chosen as the capital, as it had gained the admiration of all mankind, on account of its pleasant situation, its extent, the magnificence of its buildings, and the mildness and goodness of its climate. He fixes the seat of his empire at Damascus.

In order to render the city venerable to the Mussulmen in particular, he resolved that the very pulpit from which Mahomet had propagated Islamism, should be brought thither. He hoped that by erecting so precious a relick of Mahometism in the mosque of Damascus, and ascending it himself, to perform the public service, the people, struck He proposes to bring thither Mahomet's pulpit.

MOAWIYAH. at the sight of it, would have a stronger attachment to his person, and pay a greater regard to his dignity.

Hegyra 54.
Chr. æt. 673.

He therefore sent to Medina, and commanded that the pulpit of the prophet should be forthwith sent to him. The Medinians, alarmed at the Caliph's design, entreated that they would not deprive them of a treasure which was the only thing they had to comfort them, since it was determined their city should be no longer honoured with the presence of their sovereign, as it had been ever since the days of the apostle of God.

The Medinians oppose it.

But their remonstrances were ineffectual, and the order imported that the pulpit should be brought away even by force, if need required. They therefore prepared to execute the Caliph's commands notwithstanding the opposition of the Medinians, when there immediately happened an eclipse of the sun, which they all looked on as a prodigy, and as a manifest indication of the divine displeasure, for their presuming to lay hands on the apostle's pulpit: and the messengers of Moawiyāh, terrified at an event, which they superstitiously concluded to be a miracle, desisted from their enterprize. They therefore informed the Caliph of what had happened, and received orders to leave the relic in the place where the prophet himself had set it.

Moawiyah gives the government of Medina to Merwan.

In this year Moawiyah deprived Saëd of the government of Medina, and restored it to Merwān-ebn-Hakem, the former possessor.

But

But authors do not say what was the cause of this change. The Caliph also commanded Merwân to demolish Saëd's house, and seize all his effects in Hejaz. The new governor acquainted Saëd with the purport of his orders, and told him he could by no means avoid putting them in execution: He even remonstrated to Saëd, that if he had been in his (Merwân's) place, he would have done the like, a governor being obliged to obey the commands of his sovereign.

MOAWIYAH.

Hegyra 54.

Chr. ær. 674.

He was much surprized when Saëd informed him that he had received orders from the Caliph at the time he himself was governor, to treat Merwân in like manner, but in regard to the friendship that had so long subsisted between them, he had ventured to disobey. In a word, he produced the Caliph's letter, and told Merwân he had rather chosen to risque the Caliph's displeasure, than feel the pain he must have suffered in ruining his friend. Merwân readily acknowledged Saëd's superior generosity, imitated him in his conduct, and gave over all thoughts of executing the Caliph's order. They both easily perceived that this was an artful contrivance of Moawiyah to set them at variance, lest their union should prove prejudicial to his authority. Merwân wrote to Moawiyah on this account, and he being not a little ashamed at his own ungenerous dealing, revoked the unjust command, approved of

MOAWIYAH. their conduct, and assured them they might
 Hegyra 54. depend on his friendship.
 Chr. ær. 673.

Obeidollah
 made gover-
 nor of Chora-
 san.

The same year the Caliph gave the govern-
 ment of the province of Chorasán to Obei-
 dollah, the son of Ziyad, who was then but
 20 * years old. This extraordinary favour
 was bestowed on him for his behaviour when
 upon the death of his father he came to pay
 his duty to Moawiyah, and to give an ac-
 count of what had passed in the several pro-
 vinces of which Ziyad had lately been go-
 vernor. That young Mussulman spoke with
 so much good sense and judgment, and gave
 so satisfactory an account of the dispositions,
 character, zeal and conduct of his father's
 deputies, that the Caliph, amazed to find so
 much merit in so young a man, readily
 placed his whole confidence in him, and set
 him over a considerable province. †

He defeats the
 Turks.

Moawiyah had not the least cause to repent
 the choice he had made. Obeidollah soon
 gained the affections of the people committed
 to his charge; and they boldly marched un-
 der his command, when he had formed a
 design of attacking the enemies of the state.
 He passed the river Gihon, otherwise called

* Ockley says, 25 years.

† This year Moawiyah deposed Samrah, who was Zi-
 yad's deputy over Basorah. When Samrah heard the
 news, he said, "God curse Moawiyah: If I had served
 God so well as I have served him, he would never have
 damned me to all eternity." This much resembles the speech
 made by Cardinal Wolsey when he was seized by order
 of Henry the Eighth. Perhaps the Cardinal was indebted
 to this Arabian for the thought.

the

the Oxus, and advanced as far as the mountains of Bochara. There he encountered the Turks, and giving them battle, he beat them, and put their forces so totally to the rout, that their queen, who was in the action, lost one of her buskins in the flight, which made the fortune of him that found it; for it was so richly ornamented, that it was valued at two thousand pieces of gold.

Obeidallah was preparing to push his conquests with the utmost vigour, when he was recalled by the Caliph, who had taken a resolution of sending him to Basorah to replace Abdallah the son of Amru, whom he was forced to deprive of that government, on account of a commotion which happened in that city. One day as Abdallah was preaching in the mosque, a leading man of one of the tribes of the Arabians threw dust at him. The governor, enraged at so gross an insult, caused the Mussulman who had offended to be forthwith seized, and following Ziyad's example on a like occasion, he ordered his hand to be cut off, which was executed on the spot.

Some of the leading men in Basorah, and in particular the chiefs of the tribes, who were the governor's enemies, went to Moawiyah, and loudly complained of Abdallah's cruelty, who had so basely treated one of the chief inhabitants of the city, without any proof of the insult he pretended to have received.

MOAWIYAH.
Hegyra 54.
Chr. ær. 673.

Hegyra 55.
Chr. ær. 674.
Obeidallah is recalled from his government, and the reason why.

MOAWIYAH received *. And they entreated the Caliph
 Hegyra 55. to execute the law of retaliation upon the
 Chr. ær. 674. governor.

The Caliph, amazed at the warmth and eagerness with which the Basorians prosecuted Abdallah, strove to appease them by promising to punish him; he gave them to understand they could have no retaliation against his deputy, but he would fine him. It soon appeared that this judgment was given only to please the Basorians; for Moawiyah privately gave order that Abdallah should pay no part of the fine, and it was actually issued from the public treasury.

The heat with which this affair was carried on, plainly convinced Moawiyah to how great a degree the Basorians were disgusted with their governor. He foresaw it would be impossible to continue him in his post, without exposing him to fresh insults. He resolved therefore to recall him, and substituted in his room Obeidollah, the son of Ziyad, who left Chorasan to the care of one Aslam, a worthless man, and very unfit for an employment of so much importance. He was soon dismissed, and Moawiyah appointed Saëd, the Caliph Othman's grandson, lieu-

* Upon being applied to by the chief of the tribe, they told him Moawiyah would deal by him and his, as he had dealt with Hejer and his companions; wherefore, added they, give it under your hand that you did the action indiscreetly, which he foolishly complied with, in hopes of pacifying them; and the messengers produced it to Moawiyah in support of their charge against him.

tenant in his stead. In this place he gained as great a reputation as Obeidollah had already acquired there, by adding new provinces to those of which the Mussalmen were already in possession *.

MOAWIYAH.
Hegyra 55.
Chr. ær. 674.

Hitherto the government had been elective, but the great success which had attended Moawiyah in all his undertakings, from the time of his elevation to the Caliphate, had inspired him with a design of rendering that dignity hereditary in his family. He had been long ruminating on this project, and at last resolved to put it in execution, and to oblige the people to declare his son Yezid his heir and successor. For this purpose he wrote circular letters to all the provinces; the Syrians and Irakians came in to the Caliph's design, and Yezid was proclaimed by them without the least opposition.

Hegyra 56.
Chr. ær. 675.
Moawiyah
procures his
son to be ac-
knowledged
his successor.

But it was not so at Medina. Malek, who was then governor of that city, having attempted to cause Yezid to be proclaimed there, as presumptive heir to the Caliphate, was strongly opposed by the major part of the inhabitants, who were headed by Houssein the son of Ali, Abdallah-ebn-Amer, Abdarrahiman, the son of Abubecre, and brother of Aïsha, and Abdallah the son of Zobeir; who unanimously declared they would

* Saed passed the river Gihon, formerly Oxus, went to Samarcand (afterwards the capital of the great Tamerlane) and Sogd. Having there routed the idolaters, he went to Tarmad, which surrendered to him.

never

MOAWIYAH. never suffer a dignity to be rendered hereditary, which had been always elective amongst the Mussulmen. They represented to him that the crown ought to be given by the votes of the people alone; and that it ought always to be conferred on the most worthy, agreeable to the intention of the prophet and his successors, who had never appointed, or so much as named a person to reign after them.

The Caliph having been soon informed of what passed at Medina, in hopes of encouraging the matter by his presence, went thither in person, attended by a thousand horse, and had a long conference with Aiesha on that subject. We are not told the particulars of what passed there; but the result was, that the inhabitants of Hejaz publicly acknowledged Yezid as heir to the Caliphate.

Moawiyah having thus succeeded in drawing off the people from their chiefs of the opposite faction, attempted to bring over the heads themselves. He ascended the pulpit in the mosque, and having read the prayers, he made a very pathetic speech, to convince them how necessary it was, for the sake of the public tranquillity, that such as had opposed Yezid's election, should comply with the opinion of those who had submitted to it. He employed his utmost efforts to make them unanimous, but all in vain; for, spight of all his remonstrances and threats, the adherents stood their ground,
and

and shewed by their resolute answers that they despised his menaces.

MOAWIYAH.

Hegyra 57.
Chr. æt. 676.

Though Moawiyah was vehemently enraged, and had a force at hand, he dared not offer any violence to the opponents; they were very considerable amongst the people, and even amongst those of a contrary opinion; so that the Caliph did not think it prudent to make use of compulsion.

After this, Moawiyah gave his advice to Yezid touching his conduct when he should be placed on the throne, and told him what he had to fear from the chiefs of the opposite faction. "Hossein, said he, has a strong party, consisting of his own family, and many amongst the Irakians; they will continually urge him to make war against you, and perhaps he will comply; but it will be rather from notions of honour, than through ambition: Therefore if by the fortune of war he comes under your power, remember he is your relation; consider he is a person of singular merit, and set him at liberty without the least hesitation. As to Abdallah, the son of Amer, I think you have little to fear from him; he is too much given up to devotion to think of engaging in plots and conspiracies. With regard to Abdarrahman, I think, (but for a contrary reason) he will not prove a more formidable enemy: He is so guided by the opinion of others, and so totally addicted to women and play, that it is very improbable he should enter

Moawiyah informs Yezid of the characters of the chief of the opponents.

into

MOAWIYAH
Hegira 57.
Chr. æt. 676.

into any cabal. But Abdallah, son-Zobeir is the man you ought most to fear; he is of an enterprising genius, and capable of any undertaking; he will attack you with the strength of the lion, and the subtilty of the fox: death alone can free you from such an enemy: therefore if ever he falls into your hands, cut him in pieces."

Moawiyah was highly pleased that he had carried his grand point, and that an innovation of so great importance as the appointing a successor to the crown in his life-time, had caused no greater disturbances than those already mentioned. He thought his son was fit to reign, but the opinion he entertained of his merit was without foundation. Viewing him with a father's eye, he spied in him a thousand perfections; but paternal love made him blind to all his faults.

What retarded
Moawiyah's
design of caus-
ing his son to
be acknow-
ledged his suc-
cessor.

Yezid was a profligate young man, wholly given up to sporting, gaming and drinking. The famous Ziyad knew him well; and having been consulted by Moawiyah at the time that Caliph was revolving in his mind the design of transmitting the crown to his son, he did all in his power to divert his sovereign from executing the project. Ziyad only objected how dangerous it would be to alter the fundamental constitution of the state. As to Yezid's fitness and merit, he was cautious of being too explicit to a father; however it appeared from what he said, that he did not think Yezid would answer the Caliph's

CHAP

high expectations, or that the choice would do honour either to the throne or the nation. Moswiah Hegyra 57. Chr. ar. 670.

Moswiah was staggered by these remonstrances, and for some years laid his project aside; but upon Ziyad's death, who was the only man that had taken the liberty of speaking to him touching his son's disposition and qualifications, he resumed the design; however two years passed after his return to Damascus, before he suffered him to perform the functions of the Caliphate.

In this interval historians make little mention of the Arabian empire; they only relate the death of the famous Aiesha, who ended her days at Medina, and who during her life time had been treated with the utmost respect by the Mussulmen *. The same year also died her brother Abdarrahan, who was one of the four that opposed Yezid's inauguration. Hegyra 58. Chr. ar. 677. Death of Aiesha and Abdarrahan.

The next year died Abu-Hureirah, who had been one of Mahomet's chief confidants. Death of Abu-Hureirah.

The true name or pedigree of that Mussulman is not known, that which is above mentioned being a nick-name, signifying father of the cat, which was given him by Mahomet, on account of his fondness for one of those animals, which he always carried about with him. Hegyra 59. Chr. ar. 678.

* We must except the time when she exposed herself in the expedition against Ali, as before related. At other times she was called prophetess; and when any person spoke to her, it was generally by the title of Mother of the Faithful.

MOAWIYAH. The 60th year of the Hegyra was remarkable for the inauguration of Yezid. He was publicly acknowledged as his father's colleague, and took his seat as presumptive heir to the Caliphate. The ceremony was performed with great pomp and solemnity, and the young prince received the compliments and allegiance of all the provinces of the empire from their respective ambassadors.

Blind fondness of Moawiyah for Yezid. Amongst the rest came Al-Ahnaph, a venerable old man, Yezid's uncle. He abode some time at the Caliph's court, and the fond father being desirous that all the world should join with him in entertaining a good opinion of his son's capacity, desired Al-Ahnaph to discourse him; and to give him a fair opportunity of trying his parts, he left them some time alone, with an injunction to tell him sincerely what he thought of Yezid.

This was a very troublesome task to Al-Ahnaph; he was not at all pleased with his nephew's capacity and character, and was consequently very unwilling plainly to speak his sentiments to his brother. He avoided it as long as he could, but when he was on the point of leaving Damascus, Moawiyah reminded him of the injunction. The old man gravely and honestly answered: "If we lye, we are afraid of God; and if we speak truth, we are afraid of you: you know best both his night and his day; his inside and his outside, his coming in and his going out; it is our business

ness to hear and obey : yours to give counsel to the people".

MOAWIYAH
Hegira 60.
Chr. æt. 679.

This was enough to have opened the Caliph's eyes, as to the supposed merit of his son ; but that able clear-sighted man, so famous among his countrymen for his great discernment, blinded by paternal fondness, entertained too favourable an opinion of him, which could by no means be eradicated. Though otherwise a prudent man, he could not help frequently commending his son for his majestic look, and expressing in conversation the great opinion he had of his abilities for governing a potent empire. But unhappily for him, as well as for the nation, he was the only person of that opinion.

It is related that in one of his harangues to the people (after the public prayers) he thus addressed himself to the Deity : " O God ! If thou knowest that I have settled the government upon my son, because according to the best of my judgment I think him qualified for it, confirm it to him. But if I have done it out of affection, confirm it not. "

Moawiyah began at that time insensibly to decline ; he was advanced in years, and the fatigues of war, and those he had otherwise sustained in order to gratify his ambition, had greatly weakened his constitution. The last speech he made in public, was to this effect : " I am like the corn that is to be reaped. I have governed you a long time,

MOAWIYAH. time, till we are weary of each other ; both
 Hegyra 60. willing to part. I am superior to all those
 Ch. xi. 679. that shall come after me, as my predecessors
 were superior to me. Whosoever loves
 to meet God, God loves to meet him. O
 God ! I love to meet thee, do thou love to
 meet me ! ”

Moawiyah's
 last advice to
 Yezid.

Shortly after this he was seized with a
 fainting fit, and was sensible his end was
 approaching. His son being then absent, he
 called to him the captain of his guards, and
 another of his chief officers, and said to
 them : Remember me to Yezid, and tell
 him this from me : “ Look upon the Ara-
 bians as your stock and foundation, and
 when they send any ambassadors to you,
 treat them with courtesy and respect. Take
 care of the Syrians, they are firmly in your
 interest, to them you are indebted for the
 inheritance I leave you, and you may depend
 upon them whenever you are attacked by
 your enemies : but if you have occasion to
 employ them out of their own country, send
 them home again so soon as they have done
 their business, for they become worse by
 staying long abroad. Should the Irakians
 demand a new governor every day, oblige
 them, for you had better in such case part
 with your dearest friend, than have an hun-
 dred thousand swords drawn against you. If
 Abdallah the son of Zobeir attacks you, op-
 pose him ; if he offers you peace, accept it,
 and

and be as sparing as possible of the blood of your subjects.”

MOAWIYAH.

Hegyra 60.

Ch. ar. 679.

Moawiyah died in the twentieth year of his reign, and about the seventy fifth year of his age. When he was dead, Dehat the son of Kais assembled the people in the mosque, and mounting the pulpit with Moawiyah's winding sheet, he shewed it to the people to satisfy them of his death: he then made an encomium upon him, and said the burial prayer over him.

Death of Moawiyah.

Such was the end of Moawiyah, a prince in great repute amongst the Mussulmen, on account of the many eminent posts he possessed. Having been secretary to Mahomet, he was appointed governor of Syria, which he held four years under the Caliph Omar, and in which he was continued by Othman, during the whole course of his reign, which was about twelve years; and four years more he kept Syria in his own hands by force, during his dispute with Ali. So that the time of his government, and of his reign, was about forty years.

His character.

He was of a merciful disposition, and courageous: he was easy of access, and all such as had any affairs to transact with him, could not help commending his polite and affable behaviour. He was of a quick capacity, thoroughly skilled in the administration of government, and master of admirable sagacity in discerning the characters and merit of men. In respect to his son indeed, he

MOAWIYAH- either did not, or would not know his true
 Hegyra 60. character.
 Ch. xx. 679.

Authors speak highly in praise of the noble generosity of this Caliph. They tell us that when he received visits from persons of high rank and quality, he usually invited them to take any thing of value, or curious, belonging to him, that they had a mind to *.

The strict Mussulmen were not a little offended at the richness of his dress; for till his time the Caliphs had worn only woollen garments. But so soon as he became governor of Syria, he began to make use of silk, and ever afterwards was cloathed in rich and costly array. He also lived in a very splendid manner, and made no scruple of constantly drinking wine, contrary to the usage of his predecessors, who had always looked upon that liquor to be absolutely prohibited.

This great prince set himself above all the laws in order to attain the sovereign dignity; he gained it without being indebted to an election, or the suffrages of the nation; by the help of Amru he took such prudent measures that he assumed the title of Caliph by the sole assistance and countenance of the votes of the Syrians, spight of the nomina-

* He made a present to Aiesha of a bracelet worth 100,000 pieces of gold. He presented Hassan with 300,000 pieces. To Abdallah the son of Zobeir he gave 100,000. To Hossein 100,000. The like to Abdollah-ben-Jaafar. To Merwan the son of Hakem, afterwards Caliph, 100,000. At another time he presented Hassan with four millions.

tion of Hassan, whom the Arabians had raised to the throne. And he so managed his rival as to cause him to abdicate in his favour. His policy, being happily seconded by fortune, raised him to that amazing height, in which he fixed and maintained himself, by the help of great skill and talents.

MOAWIYAH.
Hegyra 60.
Ch. æt. 679.

He may have been reproached, as an usurper; but it must at the same time be confessed, that he was a great monarch, and at least as worthy the empire as any of those who possessed it before him. He was so fortunate as to extend the limits of his dominions, and was the first who transmitted the crown to his posterity. To him also the Saracens owed the establishment of the posts, and the raising a fleet, useful and noble improvements, which shewed the greatness of his capacity, and the extent of his genius.

This Caliph was not learned, but he had a natural taste, which supplied his want of skill and knowledge in the arts and sciences; and that taste induced him to esteem and favour such as excelled therein. He had above all a singular affection for poets, and gave them proofs of it upon every occasion that offered. Arabian authors relate (amongst others) two passages, which it may not be improper to mention.

Inclination of
Moawiyah to
poetry.

An arabian robber being once condemned to have his hand cut off, was brought before Moawiyah, in order that the sentence might be confirmed. The criminal being in the

MOAWIYAH. Caliph's presence, and reflecting on his great love for poetry, made and repeated four verses on the spot, which were very ingenious and beautiful; and Moawiyah was so highly pleased with them, that he forthwith pardoned the Arabian, and caused him to be set at liberty.

Hegyra 60.
Ch. ær. 679.

This pardon raised the greater admiration, as it was the first sentence pronounced by a magistrate amongst the Mussulmen, that had not been put in execution: for till the time of Moawiyah, the Caliphs had not presumed to shew favour to those whom the ordinary judges had condemned.

The great fondness which Moawiyah had for poetry, was also of great use to a young Arabian in obtaining speedy redress for a crying injury done him by the governor of Cusah, in forcibly taking from him his beauteous and beloved wife. The wretched husband came to make his complaint to the Caliph, and expressed his present condition in so moving an elegy, that Moawiyah both moved and delighted with the bold and pathetic expressions, and lively fancy of the young poet, put off the determination of all other business, in order to do him speedy justice. He sent an express to the governor, and commanded him to resign the woman without delay: and in the mean time he kept the husband at court, and treated him with great marks of respect.

The

The governor returned a very extraordinary answer, which shewed the excess of his passion. He informed the messenger that if the Caliph would permit him to retain her only twelve months, he would consent to have his head cut off at the end of that time: but the Caliph rigidly insisted on her being given up, and she was brought before him.

MOAWIYAH.
Hegyra 60.
Ch. 2r. 679.

So extraordinary an event excited the Caliph's curiosity. He was desirous of seeing a woman whose beauty was so much talked of: on the sight of her he found that fame had been far from over-rating her perfections, and that her charms were capable of inspiring each beholder with love. But when she spoke, with her usual politeness and elegance of expression, he declared that he who had received so many embassies, and conversed with the greatest men of his country, never before heard such a torrent of eloquence as flowed from the lips of that charming Arabian.

Moawiyah, in a transport of admiration, imagined he saw one of those divine women whom Mahomet has placed in his paradise, to administer to the pleasures of the blessed. He was never tired of listening to her, and continually asked her new questions, that he might give her an opportunity of speaking. After a pretty long conversation, the Caliph asked her, (having purposely assumed a serious air) for which she had the greatest affection, the governor or her husband? the fair

MOAWIYAH. arabian remaining some time silent, Moawiyah thought he had put her to a stand, and Hegyra 60. was beginning to grow angry, when she, Ch. ar. 679. with a modesty becoming her sex, answered him in verse, full of fire and spirit, in which she shewed her great love and attachment to her husband, and begged she might be restored to him. "What a prodigy of wit and beauty you are! cried the Caliph in amaze; how highly would my kingdom be honoured, if you would be pleased to share my throne! but since you are resolved to return to your own country, I will not prevent you: go then, and if you would enjoy your happy husband without fear of some fresh misfortune, keep close to your house: and if you must go out, let a thick veil cover your matchless charms from the eyes of men."

The Caliph dismissed the happy pair, to each of whom he gave the strongest proof of his esteem and regard. He made them very rich presents; and as the young Arabian had informed Moawiyah, that in endeavouring to recover his wife, he had shattered his fortune, the Caliph made it up to him by bestowing on him double the sum he had expended for that purpose. The young poet and his fair wife returned to Arabia, where they shewed their gratitude to Moawiyah, in publicly acknowledging the goodness and generosity of that Caliph, who had bestowed on them so many favours,

Shortly

Shortly after this event Moawiyah died. MOAWIYAH. Hegyra 60. Ch. xx. 679.
 The city of Damascus, which had been the place of his residence, was the place of his sepulchre, and there also were buried all the Caliphs of the dynasty of the Ommiýans.

Y E Z I D.

THE SEVENTH CALIPH.

YEZID, the son of Moawiyah, was YEZID. Hegyra 60. Ch. xx. 679.
 in the thirtieth year of his age when he ascended the throne. He was forthwith acknowledged lawful Caliph in all the Mahometan countries, except the cities of Mecca and Medina, the inhabitants whereof being enraged at the slight Moawiyah shewed them, by disregarding their right to votes in the nomination of a sovereign, they resolved to revenge the contempt of the father on the son, and to use their utmost efforts to recover their liberties and privileges. The people of Mecca and Medina refuse to acknowledge Yezid.

They might possibly have succeeded in their attempts, had it not been for the factions that divided them as to the Caliphate. Hossein and Abdallah form pretensions to the Caliphate. Hossein the son of Ali, laid claim to it as his birth-right. And Abdallah the son of Zobeir had also his views and pretensions; and they were each of them supported by a strong party, which kept up their hopes. The least disturbance would have given them an opportunity of breaking out into an open

YEZID.
Hegyra 60.
Ch. ar. 679.

revolt; but though Yezid was very indifferently provided with those talents which are necessary for the ruling a kingdom, he behaved so prudently as to maintain the quiet of the state.

The new Caliph did not remove one of the lieutenants and officers, which his father had set over the provinces. On the contrary he wrote to them, and confirmed them in their posts, informing them at the same time of the right he had to the sovereign dignity, as being then solely possessed of it by the death of Moawiyah.

Yezid having been informed, that he had no reason to fear any opposition, save only from Houssein the son of Ali, and Abdallah the son of Zobeir, he particularly mentioned those two Mussulmen in a letter he wrote to Waled the son of Otbah, then governor of Medina; and he commanded him to use his utmost endeavour to make them pay their homage without delay.

As there appeared no small danger in executing such a commission relating to persons of so considerable credit and power, Waled went to Merwân-ebn-Hakem and consulted him concerning the contents of it. Merwân was a person of note, whom Moawiyah had made use of on several occasions. We are not told why the Caliph shewed so little gratitude to him; but after he was appointed governor of Medina, he was dismissed, as we have already observed, and Saëd put in his

his place; Moawiyah afterwards restored that government to him, and again deprived him of it in favour of Waled. YEZID.
Hegyra 60.
Ch. ar. 679.

This new governor therefore went to consult Merwân, who was of opinion that they should send for Hossain and Abdallah, and that they should not mention Moawiyah's death, till they had inquired and discovered their sentiments touching Yezid's right to the Caliphate, a dignity in which he had been installed by his father, with the consent of the major part of the Mussulmen. He added, that the oath of allegiance should be then forthwith tendered to them, and if they refused to take it, their heads should be struck off.

In conformity to this advice, Waled sent a message to Hossain and Abdallah, desiring them to attend him. They answered the messenger that they would come. But as they probably had some suspicion of Moawiyah's death, they suspected what would be required of them, and took their measures accordingly.

Hossain appeared the first at the governor's house. He had taken the precaution to be attended with a large body of his friends, whom he placed about the door, with orders to come in if they should hear any disturbance. But this precaution became unnecessary by the manner in which he answered what Waled required of him. The governor having acquainted him with Moawiyah's death, invited him to own his allegiance They refuse
to take the
oath to Yezid.

Yezid.
Hegyra 60.
Ch. xx. 679.

ance to Yezid. Hossain did not absolutely refuse so to do, but answered, that it was not suitable to the dignity of Yezid that the homage due to him, particularly from a man of his distinction, should be paid in private; for considering the present situation of mens minds, such homage might be one day disputed: that therefore he considered it as an act of great importance, which ought to be performed in a solemn assembly of the people, which would render it more authentic.

Waled, imagining that Hossain spoke his real sentiments, declared himself to be of the same opinion, and firmly believing he meant to take the oath in a public assembly, he pressed him no further. Hossain took his leave of the governor in order to depart. But Merwân, who readily saw through this pretence*, said to Waled, "If Hossain does not pay his allegiance before he goes away, I foresee there will be a great deal of blood shed between you and him; let him therefore take the oath forthwith, otherwise strike off his head." Hossain having heard what Merwân said, reproached him for his sanguinary council, and leaping suddenly out of the room, went to his own house. Merwân, finding he was gone, told Waled he was in the wrong to miss so fair an opportunity, and

* It is related that Waled saw through the excuse also, but that he declined putting Hossain to death, either from principles of religion, or love to the family of Ali. Ockley, vol. II. fol. 166.

assured

assured him that he would never see Hossain any more; and indeed he soon resolved to go to some place of safety.

Yezid.
Hegyr. 66.
Ch. ar. 679.

Abdallah the son of Zobeir was then sent for: he delayed time, and amused the governor by doubtful answers; and having speedily formed a resolution, he departed from Medina with all his family, and most valuable effects.

He chose Mecca for the place of his asylum. Thither also Hossain went for refuge, with all his family, except Mahomet Hanifah, the son of Ali, who was consequently brother of Hossain, but not by the same mother.

They retire to
Mecca.

Mahomet Hanifah, who at parting expressed a most tender affection and concern for Hossain, advised him not to venture himself in any of the provinces, till his friends were gathered together in a considerable body, and then he might trust himself with them. And if he was resolved to go into any town he should prefer Mecca, whence he should immediately withdraw into the mountains, if he found the least appearance of any thing to disgust him.

One would think it might have been more advisable for them to retire together, than for the one to wander in the mountains, where he would have run the hazard of wanting necessaries, and being taken by his enemies; but arabian historians relate this fact, without making the least mention of the

YEZID.
Hegyra 60.
Ch. xi. 679.

the motives (as indeed they have done in many other instances) and therefore we must be satisfied with their relation.

Hossein, having agreed on proper measures with his brother, tenderly embraced him, and took the road to Mecca, where he arrived without the least accident. But Abdallah had not so quiet and uninterrupted a journey. Amrou the son of Saïd, who was then governor of Mecca, endeavoured to prevent him from entering the city, for which purpose he employed Amer the son of Zobeir, and brother to Abdallah, but at the same time his inveterate enemy, to march out with a detachment against his own brother. Amer readily accepted the command, and went to meet Abdallah. The latter boldly attacked Amer, beat his troops, took him prisoner, and entered triumphant into Mecca, spight of the attempts of the governor, who dared not to carry his resistance any further, on account of the particular regard and great veneration the Meccans shewed to that Mussulman, and which by the late event was considerably augmented.

Though Abdallah seemed to have interest sufficient to carry his point, yet the presence of Hossein in Mecca eclipsed his glory: the former was loved and respected, but Hossein was possessed of personal good qualities, which gained him the general love and esteem of the people. Besides, as Fatima his mother was Mahomet's daughter, and consequently he

was

was the prophet's grandson, he was held in the utmost reverence.

YEZID.
Hegyra 60.
Ch. an. 679.

The governor of Mecca, a very able and understanding man, was much embarrassed by the presence of two such troublesome guests. But he was luckily soon extricated from the difficulty by an order he received from the Caliph.

Yezid, having been informed of Waled's Amrou is
remissness in respect of Houssein and Abdallah, made go-
removed him from the government of Me- vernor of
dina, and gave it to Amrou-ebn-Saïd, who Medina.
was governor of Mecca. And Amrou ac-
cepted it with the greater pleasure, as it fur-
nished him with a reason for departing from
a city, where the authority he had gained, and
the respect that had been paid him before
the arrival of those two Mussulmen, was
afterwards greatly diminished.

Now though Amrou was firmly in Yezid's
interest, yet, he was persuaded that his ab-
sence could in no wise prejudice the Caliph's
affairs, for as Houssein and Abdallah had sever-
ally a strong party, he was in hopes their
competition would at most occasion only
some little divisions amongst the inhabitants,
that the difficulties of coming to a resolution
would cause the principal matter to remain
long undecided, and that the Caliph would
have time to take proper measures for esta-
blishing his authority, at the peril of those
who were plotting to wrest it from him.

In

Yezid.
Hegyra 60.
Cā. ær. 679.

The Irakians
offer the
crown to Hofs-
sein.

In the mean time the supposed equilibrium between the two parties proved a mere chimera. Hofssein had in fact a great superiority, which was soon apparent from the steps which the people of Irak took in his favour. Upon Hofssein all the Irakians had founded their chief hopes, and had ever detested Moawiyah as a tyrant and usurper. So soon as they heard of his death, they made not the least doubt of succeeding in the design they had formed of restoring the family of Ali to the throne.

The Cusians sent a deputation, consisting of the principal inhabitants, to Hofssein to prevail on him to embark in their design. "My lord, said the deputies to him, we consider you as lawful heir to the Caliphate. Moawiyah, whom we detest, is dead; come therefore and resume a throne which is your just right, and which that tyrant forcibly deprived you of. We acknowledge you to be our sovereign; make the people of Irak happy by your presence; through our mouths they pay you homage; they intreat you not to abandon them; and if you come amongst them, you will not only meet with a cordial reception, but find men determined to hazard their lives and fortunes in your cause."

Hofssein was far from being displeased with this step, and expressed his thanks to the deputies; however he observed to them, that notwithstanding the great assurances they gave

gave him of succeeding in the enterprize, it was the part of a prudent man to use due caution and circumspection in an affair of so great consequence, and attended with so much hazard. He promised them that he would duly weigh their proposal, and take proper measures with the utmost expedition; but he charged them to recommend it as his advice to the chief of those who had espoused his interest, to behave with great precaution, and to keep the matter a profound secret till it was ripe for execution.

Yezid.
Hegyra 60.
Ch. ar. 679.

Hossein having maturely considered this important and difficult enterprize, resolved to send his cousin Muslim, a person he could rely on, into Irak; and he gave him the necessary instructions to sound the inclinations of the people. "If you find them," said he, "so unanimous in my interest, as they have been represented, and if they are strong enough to make head against such as may appear to oppose them, you may, without further orders, boldly lead them forth."

Hossein sends
Muslim to
learn the dis-
positions of
the people.

Muslim departed from Mecca, accompanied by two faithful Mahometans, who from their knowledge of the country were qualified to serve him as guides, and by the correspondence they kept up in those parts might be useful to him in the execution of his orders. But he had scarce reached the borders of Irak, when he had the misfortune to lose them both by maladies, which suddenly put an end to their lives.

So

YEZID;
Hegyra 60.
Ch. ar. 679.

So unprosperous a beginning discouraged Muslim to such a degree, that he was on the point of giving over the undertaking. However at last he recovered his courage and came to Cufah, where he communicated his business privately only to such persons as he knew he could trust. And the matter was so closely and artfully conducted, that they reckoned themselves secure of eighteen thousand Irakians, who were ready to take up arms.

Noman's
speech to the
Cufians.

Though this secret was imparted to many persons, yet it was a long time before it was disclosed, so that Noman the son of Bafchir, who was then governor of Cufah, had not the least information of it till the party was almost ready to take the field. The moment he was apprized of the design, he called an assembly of the people in the mosque; and ascending the pulpit sword in hand, harangued them to the effect following: "I find the spirit of division and disorder is again gone forth; and I am informed that the Irakians are about to take up arms in favour of the Alians. I would exhort you in particular to remain quiet spectators of the difference. By such a conduct you will secure your own happiness and mine. But if I find that any amongst you shall interfere, I swear by the living God, and by this sword which I now hold in my hand, I will never pardon them; and I will sooner lose my life, than be wanting in my duty to the Caliph Yezid."

This

This harangue, pronounced at a time ^{YEZID.} when action would have been much more ^{Hegyra 60.} suitable, did not make the desired impressi- ^{Ch. ær. 679.} on the hearers. One of the congregation convinced him of it, by telling him that this was a matter which required stirring, but he talked like one of the weak ones. He answered, "That he had rather be one of the weak ones in obedience to God, than one of the strong in rebelling against him;" and saying these words, he came down from the pulpit.

Some Cufians being discontented at the governor's conduct, immediately complained against him to Yezid. They informed the Caliph that the design formed by Houssein's party of making an insurrection had been long discovered, and they accused the governor of not taking proper measures on so important an occasion.

The Caliph, who was highly displeased at the negligence and inattention of Noman, ^{made go-} forthwith dismissed him, and put in his place ^{vernor of} Obeidollah, son of the famous Ziyad. He ^{Cufah in the} was already governor of Basorah; but they ^{place of No-} entertained so good an opinion of his abilities, ^{man.} that they thought him equal to the task of governing both the places.

Obeidollah went to Cufah so soon as he received the Caliph's orders. And as he had taken care to gain intelligence of what steps the Alians were preparing to take, he discovered that Houssein intended soon to make his appearance in that city.

YEZID.
Hegyrâ 60.
Ch. ar. 679.

And his intelligence proved true, for Muslim, being well pleased with the success of his negotiation, wrote to Hossain to set out immediately, for that nothing now was wanting but his presence.

Conduct of
Obeidollah
for discover-
ing Hossain's
party.

Obeidollah, suspecting what would happen, was minded artfully to sound the dispositions of the Cusians in the present juncture. He kept his design profoundly secret till the moment he set out, and privately caused a report to be spread in Cusah, that Hossain would arrive there such a day. On the evening of that day he rode into the town, so disguised as to make them believe it was Hossain himself, for he wore a garment like his, and a black turban, such as the son of Ali used to wear. As he passed along he found a croud of inhabitants in the way, whom he saluted with great civility; in a word, he played his part so well, that he was taken for Hossain, and he thereby discovered that the Alians had a very considerable party in the place. He received with great seeming cordiality greetings which were meant to Hossain, and many times heard himself saluted by the title of son of the apostle.

But the Cusians were soon undeceived. Obeidollah went to the castle, and shortly afterwards arrived one hundred horse whom he had chosen for his guard. He then discovered himself, and took measures to stifle the sedition in its birth. In order to do it effectually, and with as little noise as possible, he

he resolved to search to the bottom of the intrigue. For this purpose, having been informed Muslim was the principal agent in the affair, he employed one of his officers to gain admittance into the house of that Mussulman, and to bribe some of his servants thereby to find out the secret.

The officer, who was well qualified for the unravelling an intrigue, prepared to put his master's orders in execution. He made an acquaintance with some of Muslim's family; and as he pretended to be a zealous friend to the Alians, they made no secret to him of what was transacting in favour of Houssein. He discovered that they used to meet in the night time to consult about that important affair; that they kept an exact register of all such as were of the party, and also of the troops and money they were able to raise and contribute. But in order to be the more exactly informed of the particulars, he procured himself to be introduced to Muslim and told him, that being a great friend to the cause in which he was then employed at Cufah, he was come to offer him a supply of three thousand pieces of gold. His name was forthwith inserted in the register, and he was enlisted among the number of Houssein's adherents. From that moment nothing was concealed from him, and he was soon in a condition of giving his master a true and exact account of the forces of the

YEZID.

Hegyra 60.
Ch. xxi. 6794

YEZID.
Hegyra 60.
Ch. ar. 679.

Alians, of their designs, and even of the very hour they had fixed for the carrying them into execution. When he had gained as much intelligence as was for his purpose, he suddenly disappeared, and went no more to the house of Muslim.

The unexpected absence of this man raised great suspicions in Muslim, who being apprehensive that he should be seized in his own house, left it, and went for shelter to the house of one of the Emirs of Cufah, named Sharik, who was a sincere friend to the Alians. Thither came the chief confidants of Muslim to confer on their design: but as the governor's vigilance and activity proved a great obstacle to the success of it, they resolved to assassinate him, the first time they should meet him without his attendants.

A project is
formed to kill
Obeidollah.

An opportunity soon offered itself; Obeidollah proposed to pay a visit to Sharik, who was then dangerously ill: though his sickness did not prevent him from doing all in his power to advance the interest of Houssein: Sharik having been informed of the hour the governor would come to make the visit, it was settled that they should not miss so fair an opportunity of striking the intended blow: Muslim undertook to perform it, and it was contrived that he should be placed in a corner of the room, and that he should fall on the governor when the sick man called

called for water, which was the signal appointed for that purpose.

YEZID.
Hegyra 60.
Ch. ar. 679.

Obeidollah came to the house of Sharik at the hour he had fixed, and so soon as his arrival was made known, Muslim went to his post, and so effectually concealed himself that he could not be seen. The governor, who did not entertain the least suspicion, entered the apartment with a Mussulman named Hani, who was secretly attached to Houssein, and who was concerned in the design against Obeidollah. At his house Muslim lodged on his arrival at Cufah, and there he dwelt till he came for shelter to the house of Sharik.

After the governor had discoursed some time with the sick man, the latter called for water. Muslim made a little stir, but had not courage enough to strike the blow. In the mean time, one of the governor's servants, who had attended him thither, observing what passed, suspected some treachery, and having found means to give his master a hint of his suspicions, he prevailed on him to leave the house without delay.

Muslim lets
slip a favourable opportunity.

Hani waited on the governor to his house, and returning to Sharik's chamber, he found him venting his reproaches on Muslim for his cowardice; and Hani could not help doing the like. "What an opportunity you have missed!" said he to him; "you might this night have been possessed of the castle,

Yezid.
Hegyra 60.
Ch. ær. 679.

and I leave you to judge how great advantage that event would have been to Houssein."

Muslim could not but agree that, considering the situation of Houssein's affairs, his observation was very just; but he excused himself on account of a tradition which, as he had heard, came from the apostle, who said: "The faith is contrary to murder, let not a believer murder a man unawares." The execution of this previous project was so necessary to the success of the main design, that the excuse appeared to be very ill timed. And they were obliged to think of other measures: but the governor on his part was not wanting; he without delay took such steps as were the most likely to put an end to their cabals.

Sharik died three days after Obeidollah's visit, which was the best thing that could have happened to him in that juncture; for the governor had caused such strict enquiry to be made, that he discovered the correspondence Sharik had kept up with the Iraqians, as well as the risk he himself had run, when he made the abovementioned visit.

One of Houssein's party is seized.

Hani having been seized by order of the governor, it was soon known that the design was discovered. It was Obeidollah's first intention to have seized Muslim; but as he could not readily be found, he ordered Hani to be brought before him, concluding that the one would furnish him with the means of easily finding the other.

When

When Hani appeared, the governor asked him what was become of Muslim. Hani at first pretended that he did not know; but having been confronted by one of the governor's attendants who had seen Muslim at his house, and had paid him money for the service of Hossain, Obeidollah in a rage said to him "Tell me this moment where he is."

Yezid.
Hegyra 60.
Ch. ar. 679.

"I would not tell you," replied Hani with great arrogance, "though I knew ever so well." This insolent answer so incensed Obeidollah, that, unable to contain himself, he gave him a violent blow with his mace, which broke his nose, and wounded him sorely. Hani in a fury attempted to snatch a sword from one of the guards, but was prevented, and being secured, he was forthwith sent prisoner to the castle, and declared worthy of death.

This event made a great noise amongst Hani's friends in the city. A report being spread that he was murdered, a great number of armed men flocked to the castle, in order to revenge his death on the authors of it: but they were told that Hani was not dead, and that he was only imprisoned by order of the government, on which the croud dispersed.

The governor assembled his Emirs and chief men under him, and went to the prison to examine Hani; when suddenly a great noise was heard on all sides.

YEZID.
Hegyra 60.
Ch. ær. 679.

The guard in the castle ran to arms; and news was brought to Obeidollah that a body of men was marching up to the castle with colours flying.

Muslim takes
up arms.

They were headed by Muslim, who, seriously reflecting on what had passed, resolved to declare himself openly, for he found that arms alone could secure him from Obeidollah's vengeance. He therefore mounted his horse, and appearing in the streets of Cufah, gave the signal agreed on to be given when it should be a proper time to begin the insurrection*; upon which he was soon joined by about four thousand men, with whom he marched out of the city (under two colours, the one green, and the other red) in order to surprize the castle. He at the same time dispatched an express to Houssein, entreating him to come and join him without delay.

The governor gave out such prudent orders, and his troops shewed so much courage and firmness, that Muslim was disheartened, and dared not to go on with his enterprize. The conspirators thus checked, Obeidollah sent several persons of note and credit out of the castle, who went amongst the people and dissuaded them from hazarding themselves on such an account.

The rebels
abandon him.

These remonstrances had such an effect that the Cufians in general, terrified at the

* The words were, Ya mensfour ommet! O thou that art helped by the people! meaning Houssein.

dangerous

dangerous situation of those who had taken up arms, left the city, and spread a panick among Muslim's troops. There was even a Mussulman who told that chief of the rebels, that he had best get away, or he would repent of it. He at first despised such language, and expected each moment to be joined by the rest of his party in Cufah, to attack the castle by open force; but how great was his surprize, when he saw the ranks of his soldiers insensibly thinned! all his men deserted him by degrees, and at last he was obliged to go and hide himself in the city, having no more of his adherents than thirty left about him out of the great number that had at first joined him.

YEZID.
Hegyra 60.
Ch. ær. 679

The governor, who was highly pleased to find that the rebels dispersed of themselves, was in no great haste to seize Muslim; he suffered him to take refuge in the city, but he intended speedily to punish him for his rebellion: and he took no other step than the promising a reward to any person that should discover the traitor.

Muslim, having re-entered Cufah, and finding very few friends in the city, concealed himself during the rest of the day; about the twilight of the evening he departed without a guide, or any other person to assist or comfort him, so fearful was he of trusting any one of those people, whose
inconstancy

Muslim takes
to flight.

YEZID.
Hagyra 60.
Ch. xx. 679.

inconstancy he had so lately and so fatally experienced.

As he was bent only on making his escape, and knew not the country, or whither to go, he wandered a long time without finding any place where he could conceal himself. At last, he saw a light at a distance, and making towards it, found a lone house. Having knocked at the door, it was opened by an old woman, of whom he asked some water to drink. He then informed her of the great fatigue he had undergone, and begged she would permit him to stay the remainder of the night in her habitation.

The woman refused to comply with his request, alledging that she had no place where she could lodge him: that she had but one spare room, which was her son's; but that she could not put any person into it, because she expected her son that very night from Cusah, whither he was gone on business, and that she had sat up so late in expectation of his coming home.

Muslim, without being discouraged at her refusal, reiterated his entreaties, and pressed her at least to give him shelter under her roof till day-light. "It is in your power," said he, "to do me a signal service, which you will have no cause to repent of." "But pray who are you, and what would you have me do?" replied the woman. Muslim then told her his name, and how the people had deserted him; which she no sooner heard,

heard, than she readily let him in, and conveyed him to the most secret and retired part of her house. And as he stood in great need of refreshment, she made the best provision for him in her power, and used the best means she could to enable him to pass the night comfortably.

YEZID.
Hegyra 60.
Ch. ar. 679.

Whilst the woman was thus employed, her son came home; and observing his mother to go backwards and forwards in an unusual manner, he asked what was the cause of it. She at first concealed the secret; but upon her son's great importunity, she owned to him, that Muslim having fled from Cufah, he had begged her to give him refuge at her house, and that she had with great pleasure admitted him.

The young Mussulman having heard at Cufah that the governor had promised a reward to the person that should discover Muslim, he resolved to take the benefit of it. After having rested a few hours, he pretended he had business at the city, and setting out early the next morning, went to Obeidollah, and informed him of the discovery he had made.

Upon this information, the governor sent a party of fifty horse, who surrounded the house where Muslim was concealed; and he being informed of his danger, snatched his sword, and went to oppose the horsemen who were then entering the doors. A very brisk attack ensued, and he

Muslim is
taken, and
brought to
Cufah.

YEZID.
Hegyra 60.
Ch. æt. 679.

he behaved with amazing activity and courage; having killed several, and thrice driven the rest of the party out of the house.

It was of some advantage to Muslim, independant of his courage, that the horsemen had received orders to spare him; for the governor, who was desirous of going to the bottom of the conspiracy, had strongly in-joined them to take him (if possible) alive. Spight of his stout resistance, he was at last overpowered with numbers, and grievously wounded; when the party closing in upon him, he was disarmed; and being bound, was mounted on his own mule, and carried to Cufah.

The officer that commanded the detachment observing Muslim to weep, told him that it did not become a man who was at the head of so important and bold an enterprise, and who had just given such evident proofs of courage, to shed tears. Muslim answered, that he wept not for himself, but for Houssein, who, he feared, was on his journey to Cufah. He was so moved at the misfortunes with which that prince was threatened, that he attempted to send him advice not to proceed any farther, but to return to Mecca. For this purpose he applied to one of the horsemen, whom he judged to be of a more courteous and humane disposition than his comrades, and having conversed some time with him on the road, he gave him to understand that
he

he would be amply rewarded if he could procure such information to be given to Houssein. The soldier promised to send a messenger accordingly, which he performed, but the messenger did not do his part.

YEZID.
Hegyra 60.
Ch ær. 679.

When Muslim arrived at the castle, he found a great number of the Emirs, who were in the audience-chamber waiting for Obeidollah. It was no difficult matter for Muslim to perceive that the friends of Yezid were highly incensed against him: they even refused him a draught of water which he asked for on his arrival, telling him he should have no drink till he drank the Hamin.*

Though this outset prognosticated nothing in favour of Muslim, he was far from being dejected; on the contrary he shewed great firmness and resolution. When the governor appeared he did not salute him; and some that were present having taken the liberty of reproving him for it, he boldly answered, that if even Yezid were there, he should not think himself obliged so to do, unless he would give him his life.

Obeidollah being seated, with the rest of the Emirs, sharply reprimanded Muslim for raising disturbances and divisions amongst the people of Cufah, and of the rest of Irak, who were before that time peaceable and unanimous: "The inhabitants of Cufah,

* A scalding liquor, which the Mahometans feign shall be the drink of the damned in hell.

and

YEZID.
Hegyra 60.
Ch. ar. 679.

and of the rest of Irak are ready to prove the contrary of what you assert," answered Muslim with great boldness: "they have not forgot the cruelties of your father Ziyad, (which surpassed even those of a Cosroes) who tyrannized over the people, and made the cities and fields to flow with their blood. I came here, to subject those wretched inhabitants to the mild and equitable laws of a prince, who would have governed them according to justice, and the book revealed to the prophet†."

The governor, enraged at Muslim's discourse, treated him very roughly; and amongst other things told him, he was not surely guided by the determination of the book, when he used to tipple wine at Medina. Muslim denied the accusation, and for the truth of his assertion appealed to God. At last, after some few other altercations, the governor pronounced sentence of death upon him. Having permission to make his will, Muslim whispered one of his friends to whom he gave seven hundred pieces of gold, and begged he would take care to prevent Hossein from proceeding any further on his journey. One of the by-standers having overheard what Muslim said, informed the governor of it, who declared that if Hossein would be quiet, no person would dis-

† Meaning the Koran.

turb him ; but if he was the aggressor, they would not spare him. YEZID.
Hegyra 60.
Ch. ar. 679.

In a short time Obeidollah caused Muslim to be carried to the top of the castle, where he was beheaded. His head was first thrown down to the bottom, and his body after it. Muslim and Hani are beheaded.
Hani was beheaded the same day ; but the execution was performed in the streets of Cufah. The governor sent both the heads to Yezid, with a letter containing a full account of that event.

Whilst this bloody scene was acting at Cufah, Houssein was making preparations for his journey thither, expecting to find things in a most favourable situation for him. Houssein pre-
pares for his
journey to
Cufah.
Besides the account which Muslim sent him at the time he proposed to take the castle, he had received a great number of letters from the inhabitants of Cufah, earnestly requesting him to appear amongst them. They at the same time sent him a list of the number of those he might absolutely depend on ; which, according to an arabian author, amounted to one hundred and forty thousand persons.

The earnest and repeated solicitations of his adherents in Cufah, and the great number of friends he expected to find there, made Houssein resolve to accept the invitation. He sent to Cufah a trusty friend, named Kais, to give notice of his approach, and then made the necessary preparations for his departure, spight of the prudent remonstrances
of

YEZID.
Hegyra 60.
Ch. æt. 679.

of his friends, who dissuaded him from embarking in so desperate an undertaking. Abdallah the son of Abbas, an old man, venerable on account of his many eminent virtues and consummate prudence, visited him in hopes to prevail on him to give over the design. Houssein was persuaded he should not only fully refute all Abdallah's arguments, but also bring him over to his own opinion, by producing the letters he had received; he looked upon those as so many sure pledges of the success of his enterprize: he added, with a transport of joy, that relying on the assistance of heaven, he could by no means decline going, and putting himself at the head of such a body of brave men, who were ready to sacrifice their lives and fortunes in his cause.

"I would readily concur with you in opinion," replied the sage old man, "if you were certain that the Cufians had taken up arms, killed their governor, driven out Yezid's forces, and were absolute masters of the city, and the whole province. But are they not in the power of their Emirs? are not his forces dispersed over the whole country to bridle the people? I wonder you cannot see through the design of the Cufians in giving you an invitation at such a juncture! they have invited you to embark with them in a war which they are ready to commence, through the turbulence of their dispositions; and they will as readily desert

desert you through their wonted ficklenefs and perfidy. Have you any security that they will not even oppose you? You will one day see, that they who now seem so forward in your interest, will become your most inveterate enemies: and of this I could give you the clearest proof, if you were disposed to hear me." These remonstrances made no impression upon Hossain, who constantly persevered in a design, which was insensibly leading him to destruction.

After this Abdallah the son of Zobeir came to pay him a visit, and held a long conference with him touching his expedition to Cufah. It was not either his design or his interest to dissuade him from the undertaking: on the contrary, foreseeing that such a step must be fatal to him, he was delighted to find him so resolutely bent on taking it; for if Hossain failed in his attempt, Abdallah would find a more ready way to the Caliphate, which he secretly aspired to, but could entertain no hopes of attaining, so long as Hossain should be living.

YEZID.
Hegyra 60.
Ch. ar. 679.
Behaviour of
Abdallah to-
wards Hos-
sein.

However, he mentioned his journey to Cufah as an expedient not very necessary, or very proper for his promotion to the Caliphate. And the reason upon which he grounded his opinion was, that neither the inhabitants of that city, nor even those of the province in general, had any right of election to that dignity. He observed to him that the people of Mecca and Medina were alone intitled to that

YEZID. privilege, and he had better abide by them, than endeavour to strengthen himself by votes which might be afterwards disputed.

Hegyra 60.
Ch. 21. 679.

Hossein answered, that he could by no means refuse to accept the offers of the Cufians: he owned, that the Meccans and Medinians had always possessed the right of election to the Caliphate; but that their want of resolution to defend their rights, had, doubtless, induced the Cufians to assume that prerogative; and that they certainly took such a step with a view to shake off the yoke of the Caliphs of the house of Ommiyah, who bestowed all their favours on the Syrians, to the loss and prejudice of the people of Arabia. Abdallah-ebn-Zobeir seemed to be convinced by these reasons, and said to Hossein at parting, "If I had so numerous a body of friends, I would this moment put myself at their head, and make Yezid's throne shake."

Abdallah
strives to di-
suade him
from the en-
terprize.

Abdallah-ebn-Abbas, who had already given such prudent council to Hossein, could not but suppose that his arguments had produced some effect on the mind of the son of Ali; he therefore repeated his visit, that he might know his final resolution.

Hossein used the same language to Abdallah, as he had made use of to all such as opposed his undertaking the journey; and repeated the same reasons he had urged in their former conference on that subject. "If you are resolved to go," said the old man, "at least do not take your wives and children with you, for,

for, I fear your case will be like Othman's; YEZID: Hegyra 60. Ch. ær. 679.
 who was murdered, whilst his wives and children stood looking on. Besides," said he, "you have rejoiced the heart of Abdallah-ebn-Zobeir, whom you ought to look upon as your rival; you will leave him behind you in Mecca, and he will soon be master of the whole province of Hejaz. He earnestly wishes for your departure; you are an obstacle to his ambitious designs; which he will openly avow the moment he shall have no longer reason to fear your presence. And I swear by that God, besides whom there is no other, if I was sure that my taking you by the hair of the head, and holding you till they came in and parted us, would be a means to detain you at Mecca, I would do it."

That zealous mussulman went still further. As he found that Hossain was bent on departing the next morning, he staid with him the whole night, and never ceased entreating him seriously to reflect on the fatal consequences that might attend his taking a step of so great importance; but he had the mortification to find that he made not the least impression upon a mind so strangely prejudiced, and he left him.

Hossain departed from Mecca with a competent retinue consisting of his wives, his children, and servants, and some friends that followed his fortune, in the whole about one hundred persons. He judged that this train would be sufficient, because he expected on

Hossain de-
parts from
Mecca.

YEZID. his arrival at Cufah, to have found all those
 Hegyra 60. under arms, of whom Muslim had made
 Ch. ær. 679. mention in the letter he sent to invite him to
 that city. But the face of affairs there was
 entirely changed; for on the very day that
 Houssein set out, the unfortunate Muslim was
 executed.

The governor Obeidollah, who was apprized of Houssein's
 sends out approach, sent out against him a body of
 troops against him. horse, consisting of 1000 men, under the
 command of Harro the son of Yezid; who
 was in no wise disaffected to Houssein's inter-
 est, and who appeared inclinable to behave
 towards him with great respect and modera-
 tion, if he would have renounced his design.

Harro being arrived at Asheraph, near the
 Euphrates, sent a party of his soldiers to the
 river for water; and ordered them, if they
 should meet Houssein, by no means to commit
 any violence against him, but if need were,
 to assist him in getting such a quantity of wa-
 ter as might be necessary for him and his
 train.

Houssein invites These orders were punctually executed.
 Harro to join They met Houssein, and behaved towards him
 him. with the utmost civility and respect. The
 son of Ali, deceived by these fair appearances,
 was in hopes of persuading the detachment
 to join him; and he desired to speak with the
 commanding officer. Harro having been in-
 formed of his request, consented, and they
 held a pretty long conference, in which Hos-
 sein alledged the invitations of the Cusians

as the reason for his undertaking the expedition, and that they waited only his presence to begin their operations: he added, that considering all things, the conduct of the Cufians was not to be wondered at, for he had a right to the Caliphate. He then alledged proofs in support of his title, and produced the letters he had received from the Cufians, who openly acknowledged the justice of his pretensions, and promised to appear and act in support of them. And finally, he exhorted Harro with his party to submit to and join him, rather than the descendants of the house of Ommyyah, who maintained themselves in possession of the Caliphate only by exercising a tyrannical authority over the Mussulmen.

YEZID.

Hegyra 60.
Ch. ær. 679.

“ In either know, nor do I desire to know,” replied Harro, “ who are the persons that have prevailed on you to engage in this undertaking; (which I must confess, seems to me a very desperate one.) Nor can I conceive what dependance you can make on the letters of the Cufians. We had no hand in writing them, nor have I any inclination to read them. All I can say is, that my orders are to bring you to the castle of Cufah, so soon as I could meet you. There you will have an opportunity to urge your reasons at large.”

Hossein declared he would sooner dye than submit to such an order; and he commanded his men to decamp and march. But Harro caused his detachment to wheel, and by that

YEZID.
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motion intercepted them. Hossain in a rage uttered the strongest imprecations * against him. Harro answered, " If any other man had presumed to say so much to me, I would have had satisfaction for the insult. But I have no room to mention your mother, without the greatest respect."

He then commanded his soldiers to withdraw and stand at a little distance, and told Hossain that he had no orders to use violence against him, but that he was commanded by no means to part with him, till he had conducted him to Cufah. " However," added he, " let us take proper measures to prevent my being called in question, or exposed to any extremity on your account, and also to secure you from violence. Write to Yezid and Obeidollah; I will write to them also. If you are the aggressor, and begin the first onset upon the Cufians, you may perhaps gain your point; but if you wait till you are attacked, you will perish."

Whilst he was yet speaking, four horsemen appeared in sight, who came from Cufah. Hossain knowing one of them, who was called Thirmah, entreated Harro that he might be suffered to come up to them; but that officer made some difficulty in consenting, as he did not know what was their design. As soon as they came up, Hossain en-

* In Arabic, the Colatka Ommoka, a common curse amongst the Arabians, and signifying in English, may your mother be childless of you.

quired of him touching the situation of his affairs at Cufah, and received a most melancholly account of the posture they were in.

YEZID.

Hegyra 60.
Ch. ar. 679.

"The nobility of Cufah," said he, "are now against you to a man. It is true the hearts of some of the inhabitants are still with you; but you may depend on it that to-morrow the swords of all will be drawn against you. As for your messenger Kais, whom you sent before you to prepare the way, he was thrown headlong from the top of the castle, by order of Obeidollah, for refusing to curse you and your father Ali*."

Hossein is told that his party in Cufah is dispersed.

"I hope," continued Thirmah, "you will not think of engaging in that enterprize with such a handful of men as now accompany you: for the plains of Cufah are full of horse and foot ready to oppose you. I therefore entreat you not to stir a step further; and if you will accept of a safe retreat, I will conduct you to our impregnable mountain Aja, where I am sure they will not run the risque of coming to attack you; and in this asylum you may remain as long as you shall think fit."

It is matter of wonder, after having received an account of the defection of his

* At this news Hossein wept, and repeated this verse of the Koran, "There are some of them who are already dead, and some of them stay in expectation and have not changed." He then added, "O God! let their mansions be in paradise, and gather them and us together, in the fixed resting place of thy mercy, and the delights of thy reward."

YEZID.
Hegyra 60.
Ch. ar. 679.

chief friends at Cufah, that Hoffeein did not abandon a design which could not but be fatal to him. And he had a fair opportunity of so doing, as Harro, who still continued with him, would have suffered him to retire without the least opposition. But Hoffeein persisting in his resolution of going to Cufah, and preparing for his march thither, Thirmah took his leave.

In the mean time affairs took insensibly a different turn. Obeidollah being informed of Hoffeein's obstinacy, changed his first design of having him brought to Cufah. He was apprehensive that though the people had then declared against him, yet through their natural inconsistency, they might turn in his favour. He therefore dispatched a courier to Harro, with orders that he should conduct the son of Ali to a certain country named in the dispatches, in which were neither cities nor fortresses. And he commanded that Hoffeein should remain there till further orders.

In a short time that governor caused about 4000 men to march under the command of Amer-ebn-Said, who arriving soon in the neighbourhood of Hoffeein, sent one of his officers to enquire of him what brought him thither.

Hegyra 61.
Ch. ar. 680.

Hoffeein, who doubtless had by that time reflected on the little probability there was of success in his enterprize, returned an answer, which, if it had been given a little sooner, might have extricated him from his difficulties. He told the officer, that if the Cufians had

had not sent him repeated invitations to come and head them, he should not have left Mecca; but as he since found they had changed their sentiments, and rejected him, he was ready and willing peaceably to return with his family and friends to his usual place of residence.

YEZID.
Hegyra 61.
Ch. ær. 680.

This answer was highly pleasing to Amer, as it was likely to put an end to all disputes. That captain was firmly attached to Houssein; when Obeidollah ordered him to march, he even declined the command, and did not accept it till the governor had severely threatened him on account of his refusal. So soon therefore as he was acquainted with Houssein's intentions, he imparted them to Obeidollah.

But the governor, who at first seemed as if he would be satisfied with Houssein's return to Mecca, had also changed his sentiments: and not content with the son of Ali's having dropped the design, Obeidollah now required that he and his adherents should recognize Yezid to be lawful Caliph. He ordered Amer to bring the matter to a speedy issue; and, in order to obtain by the means of force and necessity that which he knew would never be granted with a free will, he ordered that officer in such a manner to surround Houssein's camp, as to cut off his communication with the rivers, a grievous inconvenience in that hot and barren country,

Obeidollah
requires Houssein to acknowledge
Yezid as Caliph.

The

Yezid.
Hegyra 61.
Ch. ar. 680.

The governors orders having been imparted to Houssein, he sent to Amer, and desired he would confer with him between the two camps. That officer consented to it, and came forthwith to the appointed place; Houssein, who strove to avoid acknowledging Yezid as Caliph, desired that one of the three following conditions might be granted to him. Either 1st, that he might go to Damascus, and make an agreement with Yezid. Or, 2dly, that he might be permitted to return to Mecca. Or, 3dly, that he might be placed in some garrison, where he might make war on the Turks.

Upon the account of these proposals Amer thought he might defer executing Obeidollah's orders: he sent to inform him in what manner Houssein was then disposed to act, and to desire his directions in the matter.

Obeidollah having examined Houssein's proposals, was unwilling alone to determine what answer should be returned. He therefore called in a mussulman of note, called Shamer, and asked his opinion touching the terms that had been offered. Shamer told him, he thought the conditions were deceitful, and calculated only to gain time; and that Houssein ought to be admitted to no terms, till he had sincerely declared his sentiments as to Yezid, acknowledged him as Caliph, and taken the oath of allegiance to him.

This

This opinion determined the governor Yezid, Hegyra 61, Ch. ær. 680. (who at first seemed to look on the proposals as reasonable) and he appointed Shamer himself to communicate his resolutions to Amer, and to inform him that he should kindly receive Houssein and his friends, if they would comply with the conditions; but in case of refusal, that he should cut in pieces all such as should make any resistance. And as Obeidollah had reason to apprehend that Amer would make some difficulty in executing those orders, (as well from what had already passed, as from the advice he received of the long conference between that officer and Houssein) he commanded Shamer, in case of disobedience of the general, to cause his head to be struck off, and to take the command in his stead. He at the same time gave particular directions, that the sons of Ali, who had accompanied their brother Houssein, should not be involved in the common calamity, but letters of protection and passports should be offered to them, that they might come to Cufah.

Shamer soon arrived at Kerbela, where the two camps of Houssein and Amer were situated, and communicated to the latter Obeidollah's orders. In consequence whereof an interview was held with Houssein, who refused to accept the terms offered him: the sons of Ali also seemed little inclined to accept the letters of protection and passports offered by the governor, inveighing against him,

YEZID.
Hegyra 61.
Ch. æt. 680.

him, and saying, that the protection of God was better than that of the son of Som-miah*. Amer, finding that nothing could bring Houssein to reason, and that he should risque his own destruction in not obeying the Caliph's orders, resolved to attack the son of Ali.

Houssein made the best preparations he could for his defence; and as the number of his men was very small, in comparison to his enemies, he so formed his disposition, as to prevent being forced in his camp. He caused his tents to be strongly corded to each other, and so disposed the ropes that the enemy could not get between them, and also in the night-time covered his flanks with a deep ditch, which was filled with wood and cane, to be set on fire in case of an attack there; so that his camp was only accessible in front.

Combats be-
tween Hous-
sein's party
and the troops
of Cufah.

The next morning Houssein drew up his little troop† in order, and appeared with as much intrepidity as if he had been at the head of a numerous and well-disciplined army; and if he was not immediately defeated, it was owing to the conduct of Yezid's officers, who,

* Sommiah was a loose woman, by whom Abu-Sofian, father of Moawiyah, had a son named Ziyad, who was acknowledged by Moawiyah as his brother, tho' he was illegitimate. So that the imputation of bastardy fell directly on Ziyad, rather than on Obeidollah, who was only grandson to Sommiah; but they reaped up the shame of the father, in order to insult the son. And besides, that manner of expression is not uncommon in the old testament.

† Consisting only of 32 horse and 40 foot.

instead

instead of falling on with their whole body, suffered their soldiers singly to fight hand to hand with the soldiers of Houssein: at least, so Arabian historians relate the matter, and we cannot contradict them, how improbable soever their relation may be.

Yezid.
Hegyra 61.
Ch. ar. 680.

It is in truth very astonishing to see a body of troops near 5000 strong, commanded by an officer who would have lost his head in case of bad success, trifling away several days in accepting challenges, fighting duels, and tilting with a troop of about one hundred persons, whom they had orders at the same time to treat as rebels.

These single combats lasted three days, during which Houssein's champions distinguished themselves, and almost always were victorious.

Amer, finding that he lost the bravest of his men in these combats, would not permit them to accept any more challenges. He marched up all his troops against Houssein, and the affair was soon over. However, many of Amer's soldiers fell in the attack. Houssein's men, resolving to sell their lives dear, behaved with the utmost bravery; at last their chief, having been wounded with a sword on the head, and having received thirty-three other wounds, expired, covered with blood. Then they cut off his head, in order to send it to Obeidollah.

Houssein is
killed.

A Cufian, named Haula, was chosen for that purpose. As he arrived late at Cufah,
he

YEZID.

Hegyra 61.

Ch. 2r. 68o.

he found the gates of the castle shut; he therefore went to his own house to pass the night, and deferred waiting on the governor, till the next morning. He awaked his wife, who was in bed, and acquainted her with the cause of his coming in such haste to Cufah. "I have brought with me," said he, "a rarity, upon which the Caliph will set the highest value." His wife, eagerly asking what it was; "It is Houssein's head," replied he. "Here it is; I am commanded to present it to the governor." The woman in a rage immediately leaped out of bed, not that she was terrified at the sight, for the generality of the Arabian women being accustomed to follow the armies, were used to the most bloody adventures: but Houssein being, by Fatima his mother, the prophet's grandson, that reason alone had a strange effect upon the woman's mind. "By the only God," said she, "I will never lie again in the same bed with the man who has brought me the head of the grandson of his apostle."

The Mussulman, who, according to the custom of his nation, had more wives than one, procured another, who was not so difficult, to supply her place. But the poor woman reported, that she could not sleep all night, because of a light which she saw streaming up towards heaven from the place where Houssein's head lay.

The next morning Haula came to the castle, and presented the head to Obeidollah.

He

He at first viewed it with a brutal pleasure; then treated it reproachfully, as if it had been a living object, and struck it over the mouth with his stick. An old man who was then present, took the liberty of reproving the governor for his behaviour, and told him that he ought to have shewed more respect to the head of Houssein. "For," said he, "I have seen the lips of the apostle of God upon those lips." Obeidollah was highly displeased at the reproof, and told Zeid-ebn-Arkom, (for so he was called) that had he not a reverence for his age, he would that moment have caused his head to be struck off.

YEZID.
Hegyra 61.
Ch. ær. 680.
Houssein's
head is
brought to the
governor of
Cusah.

When he considered the discourse of this old man, he foresaw that Houssein's death would be laid to his charge; he doubted not, but that his enthusiastic followers would frame a multitude of idle and ridiculous tales and fancies; which, tho' despicable in the main, would be of considerable use in raising the credit of the faction of the Alians.

However, he still persevered in the same sentiments: and the manner in which he treated the head of Houssein, shewed what those of his family must expect: they were indeed all made prisoners in that juncture.

Zeinab, Houssein's sister, was brought to the castle, with Ali, son of that unfortunate prince, and a daughter then young. Obeidollah treated Zeinab with great haughtiness. He exulted on the success of Yezid's arms,
and

Conference
between him
and Zeinab,
Houssein's
sister.

YEZID. and triumphed in the fall of Houssein and his adherents.
 HEGYRA 61.
 CH. AR. 680.

Zeinab, who was a woman of great understanding, and of still greater courage, plainly told Obeidollah, that God would call him to judgment for his wicked dealings towards the family of the prophet; which enraged him much, and he replied with great heat and passion; but having been reminded by one of his friends that she was a woman, and that it was beneath him to be offended at what she said, he was pacified, and commended her for her good qualities. He owned she was a true daughter of Ali, who, he confessed, was a man of great note amongst the Mussulmen, and equally famous for bravery, and his admirable skill in poetry: an accomplishment, which, as we have already observed, was by the Arabians set on a level with courage.

She saves the
 life of Houssein's son.

But altho' Obeidollah had been so liberal in his praises of Ali and Zeinab, it did not prevent him from forming a resolution of putting the young Ali (Houssein's son) to death. Zeinab, who heard the fatal order issued, that must deprive her of a nephew she dearly loved, sued for his pardon, and even offered to suffer death in his stead. "If you have not yet drank deep enough of the blood of our family," said she to the governor, "add to it mine." Obeidollah seemed to be struck at the uncommon affection she shewed, and Zeinab continued to plead for her

her nephew in so moving a manner, that at last he was forgiven and dismissed. This was the second time that child had run the risque of his life; for at the time of his father's death, he was doomed to destruction upon the field of battle, but he was saved by an officer, and was afterwards called Zein Alabedin, which signifies, the ornament of the religious.

YEZID.
Hegyra 61.
Ch. ær. 680.

As to the unfortunate Houssein, his body was buried in the plain of Kerbela, on the spot where the battle was fought; and a noble mausoleum was afterwards erected over his grave. His head was first set up in Cufah, and afterwards carried about the streets, to strike the party of the Alians with terror, but that spectacle did not answer the end which Obeidollah expected from it.

The governor went from the castle to the chief Mosque, and ascending the pulpit, he reviled the memory of Houssein, in a speech which began thus: " Praised be God, who hath manifestly shewn the truth, and those that follow it, and hath assisted Yezid the governor of the faithful, and his party, and destroyed the liar, and the son of the liar, Houssein the son of Ali and his party."

The governor
reviles the
memory of
Houssein.

These words so highly provoked Ali's party, that several of them rose up in great indignation, in order to depart. Amongst the rest, was a venerable citizen, who was blind of both his eyes, which he had lost in two several battles, and who used to continue

The Alians
resent it.

YEZID. in the Mosque, praying from morning till
 Hegyra 61. night. He hearing Obeidollah's speech, cried
 Ch. ær. 680. out, "O son of Merjana*," said he, "the liar,
 the son of the liar, are you, and your father, and
 he who made you governor, and his father. O
 son of Merjana, you kill the prophets, and
 speak the words of honest men."

The governor, in a rage, caused the man to
 be forthwith seized; but some of his party
 rose, and rescued him from the guards. O-
 beidollah finding the ferment so great, was
 unwilling to carry matters to extremity, for
 fear of creating a greater disgust by a nume-
 rous execution. However, in a few days,
 the blind man was taken and put to death,
 and his body hanged on a gibbet in the square
 before the Mosque. This execution quelled
 the mutineers, whose insurrection was dis-
 approved of by the more moderate Alians:
 the generality of them even blamed the
 rashness of that Mussulman, fearing he there-
 by had brought ruin not only on himself, but
 on the whole party also.

When Obeidollah had fully glutted his
 vengeance, he sent the head of Hossain to
 Damascus, together with Zeinab and the rest
 of the family. He also sent a letter by the
 commander of the troops that escorted them,
 to Yezid, in which he wished him joy of the
 victory gained by his forces, as well as of
 the utter extirpation of the opposite party,

* Obeidollah's mother was called Merjana.

of which, he said, he had sent him plain and convincing proofs.

YEZID.
Hegyra 61.
Ch. ær. 680.

This letter did not meet with so favourable a reception as Obeidollah expected: Yezid meant only to keep Houssein within proper bounds, he was grieved at the news of his death, and could not help openly blaming the governor's cruelty. "God curse the son of Sommah," said he, shedding tears: "had Houssein been in my power, I would have forgiven him: God loved Houssein, but did not suffer him to succeed in his designs."

Yezid blames Obeidollah's conduct, and is moved with compassion towards Houssein's family.

The compassion with which the Caliph was filled, on hearing of the unhappy end of Houssein, was extended to his whole family. Yezid ordered the wives and children of that ill-fated prince to be brought before him; but he was moved when he saw them appear in a mean and wretched condition, and repeating his imprecations on Obeidollah; he said in his wrath, "God curse the son of Sommah, if he had been the father of these women ought he to have suffered them to have appeared in such a wretched condition?"

The sight of young Ali seemed to affect him the more sensibly. He travelled from Cufah to Damascus with a chain about his neck; and in that condition was brought before the Caliph. Yezid was then highly pleased that he had not listened to the cruel advice which had been given him by Ali; for on information being received at court, that he had haughtily refused to exchange a word

YEZID.
Hegyra 61.
Ch. ær. 680.

with the officers of the escort, during the whole journey, one of the Caliph's counsellors represented to him, that the young prince might one day become very formidable; and it was necessary to destroy him, "For," said he, "no man would bring up the whelp of a cur who may one day bite his master." But other counsellors who were more * humane, opposed such a piece of cruelty, and their advice prevailed.

When therefore that young prince appeared at court, the Caliph, moved at the wretched condition he saw him in, caused him to approach, and spoke to him with great affability. He concluded the audience by saying to him: "Your father would by force have deprived me of my throne; but God hath otherwise ordered." Young Ali briskly replied, with this verse of the † Koran "No accident happeneth in the earth, not in your persons, but the same was entered in the book of our decrees, before we created it."

Dispute between the Caliph and Zeinab.

The Caliph also entertained the wives of Houssein, and the rest of his family with all possible civility and respect. But a dispute suddenly arose, which had like to have proved fatal. A Syrian lord having taken a liking

* The humane counsellors said to Yezid, "O emperor of the faithful, do with them as the apostle of God would do, if he were to see them in this their condition." Which moved the Caliph to compassion.

† Koran, chap. 57.

to Fatima, Hossain's youngest sister, who accompanied Zeinab, begged the Caliph would bestow her on him. Zeinab did not stay till Yezid had returned an answer to the nobleman's request, but remonstrated to the Caliph, that as the Syrian was of a different sect from her sister, it was contrary to the law of the apostle to give her to him: "it is even out of your power" said she, haughtily to the Caliph, "to do it."

YEZID.
Hegyra 61.
Chr. ær. 686.

Yezid, enraged to see such an attempt made on his authority, answered Zeinab, that it was in his power, and he would do it if he thought fit. The daughter of Ali replied, that it was not in his power to force them to change their religion. The Caliph, raising himself from his seat, cried out in a fury, "Is it so then that you dare to answer me? it is your father and brother who have renounced the true religion." Zeinab, without being disconcerted, replied in an ironical tone; "You pretend apparently to be in the right way; without doubt your father and mother were so also." The Caliph, who now grew more furious, was going to have treated her with very opprobrious language, when Zeinab, who still preserved her usual pride and grandeur, said, "Though I am, my lord, a woman in affliction, you are the commander of the Faithful; and do you so unjustly abuse your power? these few words conveyed so sensible a reproach, that the Caliph blushed, and was ashamed of having

YEZID.
Hegyra 61.
Ch. ar. 680.

abandoned himself to passion, and thought he could not make a better reparation for his fault than by shewing now as much affability and politeness as he before had violence and rage. He therefore gave orders to conduct Zeinab and her attendants to the warm baths, and soon after sent magnificent robes and various kinds of refreshments.

The Syrian lord, still hoping that the Caliph would interpose his authority to obtain him Fatima, renewed his petition; but Yezid gave him a tart denial, and bid him speak of it no more.

Yezid's affection for
Hossein's two
sons,

By so happy a change of the Caliph's disposition, in favour of this wretched family, they were amply provided of all necessities, and found the bitterness of their past misfortunes a little alleviated. Yezid lodged them all in his palace; and even grew so fond of Hossein's two sons, Ali, and Amru, that he never went abroad without taking them with him. Khaled, Yezid's eldest son, also became very intimate with them, and the Caliph took a singular pleasure in seeing them play together. Being one day desirous of finding out the temper of Amru, who was very little, he asked him if he was willing to fight with his son Khaled, "why not," replied he with vivacity, "give each of us a sword."

A Syrian lord who was present, beheld, with admiration, the courage and resolution of the child; but at the same time reflecting
that

that those rising qualities might in time affect the peace of the state, and that Amru, pursuing the steps of his father Hossain might perhaps occasion a revolution, said to Yezid, "Take care, and be assured that a serpent always produces its like." Yezid paid little regard to the prognostic, and abated nothing of his tenderness to the child; nor of his kind respects towards the family of Hossain.

YEZID.
Hegyra 61.
Chr.ær. 680.

The family of Hossain having made a long stay at Damascus, notwithstanding the great kindness and civility with which the Caliph treated them, appeared desirous of returning to Arabia, particularly to Medina; where the wives of Hossain were disposed to fix their abode. The Caliph, being acquainted with their desires, consented to them, and ordered every thing necessary to be prepared for their journey.

The family of
Hossain re-
turn to Me-
dina.

When the Caliph dismissed them, he shewed great concern at parting, and embracing young Ali in particular, said to him "Write to me often, and visit me when you conveniently can, and be assured that whatsoever you desire shall be done for you."

The whole family therefore left Damascus, escorted by a numerous detachment, which the Caliph had put under the command of an officer of note, called Noman-ebn-Bashir. He punctually executed the Caliph's orders, and behaved towards them with the utmost civility and respect all the way. When they approached Medina, Fatima,

YEZID.
Hegyra 61.
Ch. ar. 680.

who was thoroughly sensible of that officer's great politeness, vigilance and care, said to her sister Zeinab; this Syrian hath behaved so kindly to us, that I think we ought to make him a present. Zeinab was of the same opinion, but the difficulty was, what they should give him, for they were then possessed of nothing of any value, save their bracelets. "Let us then present them to him, said the girl;" Zeinab consenting, they took off their bracelets, and sent them to Noman with an apology; begging he would accept of them as a small token of their respect for his courtesy. He modestly refused the gift, with this generous answer: "If what I have done had been only with a view to worldly interest, a less price than your jewels had been sufficient, but all that I have done was solely to please God and to testify the sincere regard I have for you and for all who are followers of the prophet." He then took his leave of them and returned to Damascus.

This unfortunate family, being now returned to Medina, began to enjoy a tranquillity to which it had been a long time a stranger; yet not till after shedding many tears for the cruel death of the unhappy Houssein.

Authors are divided in their accounts of the place of Houssein's sepulchre.

Some authors assure us that the head of that prince was also sent back to Medina, and interred near his mother Fatima. Others say that it remained at Damascus, and was put in a place called "Bal-al-Faradis,"

radis," that is, "The gate of the gardens." YEZID. Hegyra 61. Ch. ær. 680.
 And that afterwards it was removed to Palestine, from whence it was carried by the Caliphs of Egypt and buried at grand Cario, and a monument erected over it, which was called "Meschaid Houssein," or the sepulchre of Houssein.

But this account cannot be depended upon. Though it is certain that the sect of Ali have published whole volumes of fables touching the fate of the head of Houssein, and even touching the place where the rest of his body was buried, which we have already said was Kerbela. And writers have given a long and particular account of the pilgrimages made to his tomb, and of the great miracles said to be wrought there.

The Persians, who are of the sect of Ali, Veneration of the Persians for Houssein. have to this day the greatest veneration for that Caliph, and his two sons, Hassan and Houssein, whom they call the two lords. But they chiefly hold in reverence Houssein, whom they consider as a martyr: he is as it were the oracle, the saint, or to speak more properly, the idol of the nation; and they say, that if Mahomet could return upon earth he would have cause to be jealous of the great regard and esteem they pay to the memory of his grand-son.

The peace of the mussulman empire was Revolt of Abdallah the son of Zobeir. far from being confirmed by the death of that prince. Abdallah the son of Zobeir, who had never submitted to Yezid's government,

Yezid.
Hegyræ 61.
Ch. ær. 680.

Abdallah is
acknowledg-
ed Caliph
of Medina
and of Mecca.

vernment, declared publickly against him and by his conduct shewed that Yezid had in him a very formidable rival.

Abdallah, who had acquired the esteem and good will of the Arabs by his attachment to the mussulman religion, and more so by his mild and engaging behaviour, made so prudent a management of their disposition in his favour; that he obtained his ends; and was solemnly declared Caliph of Medina and Mecca.

After he was proclaimed Caliph, he harangued the people, and taking advantage of the concern that was in general expressed for the loss of Houssein, endeavoured to prejudice them against Yezid, and to engage all their voices in his own favour. He recalled to their minds the virtues and excellent qualities of that illustrious grandson of the prophet, and drew a moving picture of the perfidy of the Cuffians, who had treated him with indignity after having invited him to come to them. And observing the inclinations of the people of Medina and the great regard that they had for the prince's family; he affected to speak of them with such respect and veneration as had a very strong effect over the whole nation in his own favour.

He acted in the same manner at Medina, whither he went shortly afterwards, and where he was received with the same acclamations as at Medina. The speeches he made

made in praise of Houssein, recalled to their minds the love they had borne to that prince, and they were ready to avenge his death, by shaking off the yoke that had occasioned it.

YEZID.
Hegyra 61.
Ch. ar. 680.

Yezid was greatly surprized when he heard of this revolution. He wrote letters full of menaces against Abdallah, and even sent a silver collar to the governor of Medina, with orders to put it about his neck, and send him thus to Damascus. But Abdallah's party was so strong that the governor dared not attempt to put the Caliph's order in execution.

Amru-ebn-Saïd, governor of Mecca, was also greatly embarrassed, when he saw Abdallah publicly performing the functions of Caliph. He found it necessary to act with the utmost caution and circumspection in so critical a juncture. And finding he was not able to cope with the enemy, he had recourse to dissimulation, and pretended that he only waited for the countenance of some person of note to join with the rest of the people.

On this pretence he consulted a Mussulman of great repute, named Abdallah, the son of Amru, who was famous for his profound understanding, who used to study the stars, and also the writings of the Jews, particularly the prophecies of Daniel, which he had carefully examined. The governor having sent for him, asked what was his opinion of what had happened at Medina and

The governor
of Mecca
consults
touching the
revolt of Ab-
dallah.

YEZID. and Mecca; to whom he boldly replied,
 Hegyra 61. that Abdallah would be king, and con-
 Ch. ær. 680. tinue such to his death.

This prophetic answer being spread through Arabia, those who were attached to Abdallah-ebn-Zobeir grew more bold, whilst he made use of every means to preserve himself for the throne. In the mean time Amru, who was cautioned by this prediction, omitted nothing that was in his power to guard against the designs of the new Caliph.

Yezid re-
 moves him
 from his go-
 vernment.

The enemies of Amru took this opportunity to prejudice those who were near Yezid, whom they boldly accused of negligence or cowardice for not having seized upon Abdallah when he first revolted. Yezid, being enraged, removed Amru, and put in his place Waled the son of Otbah; who had no sooner taken possession of his government, than he caused a great number of the servants and dependants of his predecessor Amru to be imprisoned. Three hundred were seized on the very first day; and their having been barely acquainted with the last governor was enough to expose a man to the violence and fury of Waled,

Hegyra 62.
 Ch. ær. 681.

So harsh a conduct displeased every one, and Amru thought the general discontent was a favourable circumstance for prevailing on his friends to strike a blow he had meditated, and which could not fail of success. He sent a private message to the prisoners, informing them that he was going to Damascus,

mascus, to acquaint the Caliph with the situation of affairs; that if they chose to join him, they must, by the help of their numbers, break open the prison. He assured them that they should be duly supported in case of opposition, and that they should find ready in the street a sufficient number of camels, to carry them to that city.

YEZID.
Hegira 62.
Ch. ær. 681.
Amru justifies his conduct before the Caliph.

Amru took the advantage of going to Damascus, where he was well received by the Caliph, who nevertheless reproached him with the little care that he had taken of his interests in the late occurrences. "I beseech you, commander of the faithful, to hear me," replied Amru, "That which is present" added he, "you can better see than what is passed, the Meccans and the Arabs of Hegiaz were so very outrageous, and assembled in such prodigious numbers to proclaim Abdallah, that the forces which I then had were not sufficient to attack them. On the other hand, Abdallah, who was jealous of me, was always upon his guard, and never appeared but with a great number of his friends to attend him. It is true, I affected a great deal of indifference with regard to every thing that happened; but at the same time I was watching for a favourable opportunity to seize him. I very well saw, that notwithstanding his great credit and his able politics, that he was embarrassed in all his proceedings; for I had taken

YEZID.
Hegyra 62.
Ch. ar. 681.

taken care to guard all the avenues to the city, and none were suffered to enter without telling their name. Those whom I found were Abdallah's friends, I dismissed immediately without any further inquiry; as to those who appeared to have no connection with him, I enquired the cause of their coming to Mecca, and made them tell me where they proposed to lodge; and in consequence, I caused all their steps to be closely watched; you see what I thought fit to be done for your service. And now you have sent Waled, the son of Otbah, who, (if we may judge from the beginning he has made) will give you such an account of his administration as will justify my conduct, and convince you of the sincerity of my advice."

Yezid was greatly struck at Amru's defence, and owned it had surprized him. He expressed great resentment against those who had basely done Amru so ill an office, and obligingly told him, that he knew his enemies well, and was persuaded there was not one amongst them that could be compared with him for probity; he from that moment took Amru again into favour, desired him to continue at court, and treated him with great distinction.

Complaints
are made
against the
new governor
of Mecca.

Publick fame soon confirmed what Amru had said of the new governor. Complaints came from the several districts of Arabia, and at last Abdallah-ebn-Zobeir wrote

wrote a letter to Yezid, in which he complained that he had sent a man to be governor there, who was absolutely incapable of so important a trust. And he at the same time even gave the Caliph to understand that he would recal Waled, and send one in his place with whom he might treat, and who had the means of accommodating those troubles.

YEZID.
Hegyra 62.
Ch. ær. 681.

This letter greatly surprized Yezid. He was pleased to see his rival acknowledge his power, and even to ask of him the exercise of it in the very city of which Abdallah had caused him to be proclaimed Caliph. As this letter also spoke of a peace, which was what Yezid wished for, he immediately took the proper method to remove the obstacles that opposed it, and recalled Waled, and appointed in his place Othman*, a relation of his own. He was one indeed of but an indifferent understanding, devoid both of sense and experience, in a word very incapable of unravelling the intrigues which then divided the empire of the Arabs.

Yezid sends
Othman in
his place.

Othman set out for Arabia, and stopping at Medina, received the submission of some of them who acknowledged Yezid, which he considering as the act of the whole nation, imagined from thence the authority of that prince to be founded on a rock, and

Othman assures Yezid of the submission of the Medinese.

* The son of Mahomet, and grandson of Abu-Sofian.

with-

YEZID.
Hegyra 62.
Ch. ær. 681.

The ambas-
sadors enter-
tain a con-
tempt for
Yezid.

without further enquiry, he sent ambassad-
ors to Damascus to assure the Caliph of
the obedience of the Medinians.

This embassy was more hurtful to Yezid
than all the plots that had already been con-
trived against him. The extraordinary ap-
pearance of a court where the sovereign
paid no regard either to religion, or even to
common decency, was ample matter of
offence to the ambassadors. And in fact
Yezid passed his days in indolence and
frivolous amusements: he minded nothing
but splendid entertainments, where, in con-
tempt of the mussulman law, they drank
all sorts of wine to the utmost excess; and
his evenings were usually spent in company
of singing and dancing women, and in
conversation with buffoons and other mean
fellows.

The medinian deputies were received
with great pomp and civility. They con-
tinued some time at the Caliph's court; and
at their departure he made them consider-
able presents: but all he could do was not
able to get the better of the great indigna-
tion and contempt they had conceived
against him.

When the ambassadors returned to that
city, they did not in the least spare Yezid;
on the contrary, they gave such a description
of the debaucheries of his court, and in
particular of his own disorderly life, as in-
flamed

This vizir was called Abu Giaffer Mo-
 hammed : he was, says El Makin, a very
 learned man, and well versed in grammar
 and poetry ; he both spoke and wrote with
 great elegance, but at the same time he was,
 continues that author, unpolite, proud, self-
 sufficient, cruel, dishonourable, greedy of
 riches and favour, and incapable of doing a
 good office to any person.

MOTAWAKEL
 Hegyra 232.
 Ch. ær. 846.

Such was the man with whom the Caliph
 had contracted a most intimate friendship in
 the life-time of his predecessor. When Mo-
 tawakel ascended the throne, he continued
 him in the office of vizir, which he had
 executed under Wathek. The Caliph had,
 however, reason to be displeased with him,
 for having caused a quarrel between him
 and his brother ; but as he served him to
 his wish in his horrid actions and contri-
 vances, he thought fit to continue that offi-
 cer in his post.

Hegyra 233.
 Ch. ær. 847.

As the Caliph was one day talking with
 that monster, touching new kinds of punish-
 ment, he advised the erecting an iron fur-
 nace, to be stuck full of very sharp nails,
 and to inclose therein the wretch he intend-
 ed to destroy ; and a fire was to be lighted
 under it, stronger or weaker in proportion
 to the cruelty he would inflict on the victims
 to his fury.

He invents a
 new kind of
 punishment,
 which is inflict-
 ed on himself.

Unfortunately for the vizir he gave the
 Caliph fresh cause of complaint, and fell into
 the utmost disgrace. Motawakel caused him

Hegyra 234.
 Ch. ær. 848.

MOTAWAKEL to be apprehended, and resolved to destroy him; but before he put him to death, he was determined to enjoy the pleasure of tormenting him by slow degrees.

Hegyra 234-
Ch. ar. 848.

He forthwith caused him to be thrown into prison; and in the room, next the prisoner's chamber, a certain number of men were placed, who were ordered to make a noise day and night, to prevent him from taking any rest: in this situation he passed several days, during which, the persons appointed to torment him were regularly relieved.

The cruel Caliph then ordered them to cease their noise, and the wretched vizir made himself amends for his watching by a sleep of four-and-twenty hours duration; after which Motawakel taking him out of prison, caused him to be put into the dreadful furnace he had himself contrived.

But what added to the displeasure of all men, the Caliph carried his barbarity so far as to be a spectator of the torments inflicted on his vizir. He even insulted the poor wretch at a time when, unable to bear the excruciating pains, he begged the Caliph to have pity on him: "Pity is only a ridiculous weakness," said that prince, alluding to the base maxims the unhappy minister had uttered in the days of favour.

Hegyra 235-
Ch. ar. 849.

So unmerciful a conduct gave a general disgust, and might perhaps have caused an insurrection against the Caliph; but fortunately

nately for him the vizir was universally de-
 tested, insomuch, that though they abhor-
 red the cruelties inflicted on him, they could
 not help agreeing, that he well deserved the
 punishment he had suffered; and by de-
 grees the whole affair was buried in oblivion.

The Caliph took advantage of that juncture
 to secure the crown to three of his children,
 of whom the first was called Montasser, the
 second Motaz, and the third Mowaiad. He
 had also two other sons, to wit, Motamed,
 and Muaffed, whom he absolutely excluded
 the throne: however, it will appear that
 things fell out in this respect very contrary to
 his intentions. So soon as he had made this
 disposition of his dominions, he commanded
 his subjects to take the oath of allegiance to
 his children, to whom he gave the investiture
 of the lands he severally assigned them,
 by delivery of a standard. Montasser had
 the provinces of Irak, Hejaz, and Yeman.
 Motaz had Chorasán, and the country of
 Baia, and Mowaiad Syria Damascena.

The close of that year, and the beginning
 of the next, were employed by the Caliph in
 giving proofs of the hatred he bore to the
 Alians and their friends: he caused an edict
 to be published, by which the pilgrimage to
 the tomb of Ali, the prophet's son-in-law, was
 prohibited on severe penalties; and carrying
 his resentment still further, he sent orders to
 the plain of Kerbela, that they should de-
 molish the tomb of Hosein, Ali's son, who

MOTAWAKEL
 Hegyra 235.
 Ch. ær. 849.

The Caliph
 causes three
 of his sons to
 be acknow-
 ledged as his
 successors.

Hegyra 236.
 Ch. ær. 850.

He prohibits
 the pilgrimage
 to Ali's tomb.

He causes the
 tomb of
 Hosein to be
 demolished.

MOTAWAKEL was buried on that plain, after he was killed in the battle he fought there. The tomb was therefore totally rased; and that not the least vestige of it might remain, they caused a current of water to flow over the very spot on which they had erected a monument in memory of Hosein.

Ali's party, after the usual manner, relate a number of miracles, which they assert were then performed to shame the Caliph for his profaneness. Some say, that when the channel was finished, it would never serve the purpose for which the Caliph designed it; that the waters entered it indeed, and flowed to a certain distance; but when they came to the place where Hosein's tomb was erected, they stopped out of respect, and could not possibly be made to run any further.

Others say, that at the same time Ali appeared in a dream to the Caliph, and after having tartly reproved him for the outrages he committed on his family, gave him seven blows with a whip which he held in his hand: the Caliph terrified at the vision, related it in the morning, in order that some person might give him an explication of it; but his attendants all kept a profound silence. However, he found, that a man belonging to the court had told one of his friends, that the whip with which Ali smote the Caliph, was the sword which Mahomet gave him to perform his grand exploits, and that some misfortune would probably happen to the Caliph,

as

as a punishment for the insult he had committed on the memory of that illustrious Mussulman; and this kind of prediction seemed in some sort to be verified by what happened in the sequel.

Whilst that prince was thus employed in maltreating the ashes of Ali and Hosein, a sedition arose in Armenia, occasioned by the instructions he gave to Joseph ebn Mohammed, when he appointed him governor of that province, and of Aderbijan. He ordered him on his arrival to seize an officer of distinction, named Bokrat, who was patrician or chief lord of the province. The other patricians, enraged at the treatment bestowed on one of the principal members of their body, combined with Bokrat's family, and formed a league against the new governor. At a fixed day they rose up in arms, and assembling themselves near a castle called Mushi, which they had appointed for their rendezvous; they reviewed their forces, and marched up in battle-array to meet the governor. Joseph having received timely notice of their design, had prepared for his defence: and finding himself strong enough to risque an action, he boldly marched out against the rebels. This encounter proved fatal to Joseph and his troops; the governor was killed on the spot and his army totally routed.

Motawakel had no sooner received the news of this misfortune, than he caused a fresh body of troops to march, partly consisting

MOTAWAKEL

Hegyra 236.

Ch. ar. 850.

Hegyra 237.

Ch. ar. 851.

Revolt in Armenia.

The rebels

are beat by the

Turks.

MOTAWAKEL *sisting of his Turkish militia, and commanded by Buga, who was one of the principal officers of that corps. The rebels, elated by their former victory, boldly faced the new troops, and hoped easily to get the better of them; but they learned to their cost what men they had to deal with. The Turks broke them, put them totally to the rout, and pursued them to Teflis, the capital of the province, in which they besieged them.*

They are burned in Teflis.

But as the operations of the siege went on slowly, Buga contrived to reduce the place, and even entirely destroy it, if they did not soon capitulate. He caused wooden towers to be brought near the wall, from the top of which he set the place on fire. For this purpose he employed a great number of his men, who had been long expert in darting lighted firebrands: this contrivance succeeded; the houses in Teflis being built only of wood, easily took fire. A wind which arose carried the flames to several parts of the city, and it was finally reduced to ashes. Near fifty thousand men perished in the place, amongst whom were the rebels, with their leader. This was paying very dear for the defeat of a party of malecontents, who could by no means have done so much damage, as resulted from the ruin of that city.

Hegyra 238.
Ch. ær. 852.

The Greeks
plunder
Damietta.

Whilst the Caliph was thus making use of fire and sword in his own dominions, the Greeks were meditating an irruption, which proved successful in all points. Having received

ceived intelligence, by means of their spies, MOTAWAKEL that Damietta were weakly guarded, and that Hegyra 238. there was no regular troops in the garrison, Ch. x. 852. they privately made preparations for a descent; and at a time convenient for the expedition, a fleet consisting of three hundred sail of ships suddenly appeared before Damietta, when they were not in the least expected.

Terror seized on the inhabitants, who strove to make their escape by means of a little ford, which was in the midst of a most extensive space of still water, between the town and the port; but in the hurry and confusion of their flight they missed the track, and the greatest part of them miserably perished in the attempt.

The Grecians having entered the place without the least opposition, were soon busily employed in plundering and making slaves: having pillaged it during many days, they again went on board their ships, with immense riches. They at first resolved to keep the place, and leave a garrison there; but fearing it would not be possible to put the fortifications in a proper state of defence, before the arrival of the mussulman troops, they determined to plunder the city, and then destroy it, rather than run the risque of sustaining a siege, which must inevitably end in the taking of the place.

As the Caliph was hasty and passionate, he Hegyra 239. must have been greatly moved at such an Ch. x. 853. outrage; however, it does not appear that he Edicts issued against the Christians and then Jews.

MOTAWAKEL then took any measures to revenge himself on the Greeks. On the contrary, he remained as quiet in his dominions as if no misfortune had happened, and was solely employed in framing new laws and regulations for the government of the state. Such as he published that year were chiefly calculated to mortify and humble the Christians and Jews. He had some years before declared them incapable of holding any post or employment under the government. He then ordered them to wear large girdles made of leather, that they might thereby be known from the Mussulmen: in a word, he that year forbid them to ride on horses, and only suffered them to make use of mules or asses, but on condition they should have no iron stirrups to their saddles.

These mortifying distinctions caused all the Christians and Jews that were in his dominions to become his enemies. This prince was not better beloved by his own subjects; and it may safely be asserted, that he never had a sincere friend at his court. The ferocity of his disposition, and the oddity of his temper, rendered him insupportable to all such as from the nature of their office were obliged to live with him. They run the risque of their lives in parties, which might have been reasonably expected to be only parties of pleasure.

Example of
the Caliph's
ferocity.

An author relates, that often when he was debauching with his courtiers, he would
cause

cause a lion to be turned loose into the room, that he might make himself merry at the fright into which he put all his guests. At other times he used to lay serpents under the table, or break in pieces pots full of scorpions and other venomous creatures; when this strange mad prince used to command, that no person should stir from his place, on pain of death; so that they were forced to run the risque of being stung by those animals. It is true, he instantly prevented any ill consequences from the bite, by applying an excellent antidote, of which he knew the secret, and which never failed of performing a cure, though the poison was ever so strong. Thus he took a pleasure in causing men to be dangerously hurt, that he might have the credit of performing a speedy cure.

MOTAWAKEL
Hegyra 239.
Ch. 21. 853.

This savage prince seemed daily to contrive means to render himself more detested. He could not even make a friend of his own son; and he brought him up in such a manner, as effectually to destroy all those sentiments, which are implanted by nature, or infused by education, in a child towards its parent. He carried the young prince into the company of his debauched courtiers; he made him drink to excess, and then took delight in beating him, in order that he might put him in a rage. As wine and passion caused him to say many gross things, the father was displeased and beat him again; and

Hegyra 240.
Ch. 21. 854.
His conduct
to his son.

we

MOTAWAKEL we shall soon see the fatal consequences of so uncommon an education.

Hegyrs 240.
Ch. xi. 854-

Indignation
of the people
against the
Caliph.

So senseless a conduct raised great murmurs amongst all his subjects. They looked on the Caliph as a monster, unfit to live on the face of the earth; and even such of them, as through the gentleness of their dispositions were most averse to the shedding of blood, did not discountenance the design then in agitation, for assassinating the Caliph. The whole nation therefore earnestly wished his death: some of them would readily have undertaken to strike the blow, in order to gratify the people. Others, who were more moderate, only addressed their prayers to heaven, that it would be pleased soon to free the world from a prince, who by his actions debased both human nature and the throne.

He suspects a
conspiracy.

The many complaints that were so openly made against the Caliph, might at last have ended in a conspiracy, but none was yet formed; however, a slave belonging to Motawakel, having overheard some officers of distinction speak very disrespectfully of his master, imagined that some plot was contriving against him, and he forthwith ran and advised the Caliph to be on his guard.

Motawakel did not wait till he could make the enquiries necessary on such an occasion; he resolved to be before-hand with the conspirators: he did not indeed know who they were;

were ; but being persuaded, that in destroy-
 ing a considerable number of his courtiers, MOTAWAKEL
 he should certainly intimidate the rest of Hegyra 240.
 them, he imparted his design to some of Ch. xiv. 854.
 his favourite slaves, who were the usual in-
 struments of his cruelties, and with them he
 concerted the bloody project that was to be
 put in execution.

Having settled his scheme, he next in- How he pre-
 vited the chief lords and principal officers of vents it.
 the state to a festival, which was to conclude,
 according to custom, with a grand entertain-
 ment. The prince's invitation was com-
 plied with, and the festival was solemnized
 with a truly royal pomp and magnificence.
 As to the entertainment, whether the intended
 guests doubted some ill treatment from the
 Caliph, or whether they were unwilling to
 expose themselves to be wounded by the ve-
 nymous creatures which the Caliph caused
 to be laid down in the room, when the li-
 quor began to operate, a great number of
 them declined being present thereat, on va-
 rious pretences.

By this prudent precaution they saved their
 lives ; the business now was not to affright
 the guests with the appearance of some sa-
 vage beast, or venomous creatures : the Ca-
 liph had resolved to sacrifice to his fury all
 such as he had invited to the feast : in fact,
 all that were present were inhumanly butcher-
 ed. Motowakel himself began the bloody
 execution : he rose up hastily, in the midst of
 the

MOTAWAKEL the entertainment; and drawing his sword smote off the heads of such as were next him; in a moment, the persons he had appointed to second him, unsheathed their cymetars, and massacred the remainder of the guests: some of them, indeed, escaped being slain at first, by hiding themselves in the apartments, but they were soon pursued and put to death without mercy.

The Caliph, transported with brutal rage, went into the most distant parts of the palace in search of those that had made their escape. One of his favourite servants, who had the care of one of the apartments, seeing the prince come with fury in his looks, and a bloody sword in his hand, was filled with terror at his approach. He was upon such terms with his master as to have no reasonable cause to fear on his own account; but apprehensive that he might be mistaken for another by a mad man, who in his fits did not know even himself, he was greatly alarmed. When the Caliph entered the room, he cried out, "I have just now killed such a one, and such a one, and the rest shall not escape me." "That is well done, my lord," answered the servant, "but you and I must remain alive."

Though the Caliph was still in the height of his fury, he was struck at the answer: he could not even help smiling at it, and having recollected that it was his servant, he put up his cymetar into the scabbard, and with great

great composure conversed with him on the event of that fatal day. The servant easily foresaw the consequences of this cruel butchery; but he took care not to give the least hint of his apprehensions, for fear of rekindling the rage of that desperate man.

MOTAWAKEL
Hegyra 240.
Ch. ær. 854.

The reign of Motawakel was not only remarkable for the debaucheries, follies, and cruelties of that prince; the very elements seemed to declare against the Saracens; and there actually fell out at that time such uncommon and grievous events, as occasioned the reign of this Caliph to be called, The reign of prodigies, and scourges of the celestial ire.

Hegyra 241.
Ch. ær. 855.
Prodigies in
many parts of
the mussulman
empire.

Terrible earthquakes happened in Persia, in Syria, in Chorasán, and in Arabia Fælix. The earth opened, swallowed up whole cities, and destroyed an infinite number of Mussulmen. Bagdat also received a shock, but it was a trifle in comparison to what happened at Laodicea. That city, says El Makin, was totally overthrown; not one house was left standing; and but very few, of the great number of persons who inhabited that city and the neighbourhood, escaped the common calamity.

According to the same author, the springs at Mecca were almost entirely dried up, and water became so scarce, that it was sold for an hundred drachmas the load. Antioch also felt the same scourges as the other mussulman cities had undergone; an earthquake happened

Hegyra 242.
Ch. ær. 856.

MOTAWAKEL happened there, which destroyed a great many people, and threw down five hundred houses, and ninety of the towers of the walls of the city. A mountain called the Rock, burst in pieces and fell into the sea, which instantly foaming, there issued from it a thick black smoke, of an insupportable smell. In another part a river suddenly disappeared, and they could not discover at what place it drained away. About the same time the waters of the Tygris appeared as yellow as gold ; in three days afterwards it looked of the colour of blood. The thunder roared, and the lightning flashed on all sides ; and there were even some hurricanes so furious, as to tear up large trees by the roots, and carry them to a great distance in the country.

Hegyra 243.
Ch. ar. 857.

The Caliph
resolves to fix
his residence
at Damascus.

These violent shocks threw them into the utmost consternation : they knew not where to fix their abode with safety, and were filled with continual fears of a repetition of the same fatal tragedy. We are not told, whether it was on this account the Caliph changed his place of abode ; but it is certain, that in the 243d year of the Hegyra he departed from Samarath, and went to Damascus, with which he was so well pleased, that the next year he resolved to fix his residence there. He ordered some additional buildings to be made to the palace, and commanded his treasures to be conveyed to that city.

The

The utmost diligence was used to perform the Caliph's orders, when an event happened which made him suddenly alter his resolution. As he had been remiss in paying the Turkish troops, they made a great noise, and murmured that he should lay out such large sums in useless buildings, whilst the soldiery were put to great difficulties for want of their pay.

MOTAWAKEL

Hegyra 244.

Ch. xx. 858.

The Caliph, who put his whole trust in that militia, removed the cause of their complaint, and gave orders timely enough to silence all clamour; but whether it was on account of their complaints of his expence in building, or through the natural fickleness of his disposition, is uncertain, but he soon quitted Damascus, and returned to the city of Samarah.

In the course of this year the Mussulmen were again afflicted with the scourge of earthquakes, which were so violent in Syria, Persia, Chorasán and Yeman, as to overturn whole cities, and destroy more than one hundred thousand of the inhabitants of those countries.

Hegyra 245.

Ch. xx. 859.

But whilst the mussulman empire was so deeply suffering from these fatal events, the Caliph's brutality, which was far from diminishing, was a scourge almost equally terrible, more especially, since he had entertained such strong suspicions of the design of his courtiers. Far from striving to reconcile them to him by acting with more moderation and humanity, he gave a loose

to

MOTAWAKEL to his fury ; and if he did put a restraint on
 Hegyra 245. his natural inclination, it was with no other
 Ch. ar. 859. view than to secure himself from the at-
 tempts that might be made on his person.

Conversation
 between the
 Caliph and
 his vizir.

He one day advised with Fatah, his vizir
 and favourite, on that subject. When this
 minister entered the Caliph's apartment,
 he saw a sword in his hand richly ornament-
 ed, which he seemed to view with great
 pleasure : the vizir highly commended the
 beauty and workmanship of the sword,
 which was, indeed, extremely fine, and
 had cost the Caliph ten thousand crowns :
 he then asked that prince to what use he in-
 tended to put the sword. " I wish," answered
 Motawakel, " I could find out one amongst
 my Turkish soldiers, on whose valour and
 fidelity I could rely ; I would make him a
 present of this sword, and appoint him to
 guard my person."

He appoints
 Bagher to
 guard his per-
 son.

Bagher, a Turkish officer, happening
 then to enter the Caliph's apartment, Fatah
 said to that prince, " Here comes Bagher,
 a man of more worth and bravery than any
 in the whole Turkish corps ; and I am per-
 suaded you cannot meet with a more proper
 person on whom to bestow your present."
 Motawakel forthwith ordered Bagher to ap-
 proach, and put the sword into his hand,
 desiring he would keep a strict eye on all
 such as should approach his person. He at
 the same time appointed him a considerable
 salary, and enabled him to appear with dig-
 nity.

nity in the post he had just bestowed on him. MOTAWAKEL
 It will soon appear what use Bagher made, Hegyra 245.
 both of the Caliph's sword and of the con- Ch. 2r. 859.
 fidence he reposed in him.

It was not without reason that the Caliph Hegyra 246.
 took measures for the security of his person : Ch. 2r. 860.
 he well knew his subjects loudly complained Waffif is dis-
 of his conduct, and that an insurrection contented.
 might happen in a moment, which might
 bring about the greatest revolutions ; yet,
 spite of his precautions, it seemed as if he
 had prepared all things for his own destruc-
 tion : for by imprudently raising a common
 Turkish officer to a place of so great trust,
 he angered Waffif, who was (as we have
 already observed) the commander in chief
 of the Turkish soldiery.

The Caliph had made him a present of
 some demesne lands in Persian Irak, and
 Fatah shewing a desire to have them, the
 Caliph resumed his gift, and bestowed it on
 Fatah. This affair was attended with bad
 consequences ; for whether that prince did
 not take care to give to Waffif any thing by
 way of indemnification, or whether the
 Turk was not willing to part with the lands,
 he entertained a most violent resentment
 against the Caliph, which he shewed the
 first favourable opportunity.

These discontents were a little suspended War against
 on account of the war carried on against the the Greeks.
 Greeks. The mussulman troops made an
 inroad on the territories of the eastern em-
 peror,

MOTAWAKEL peror, where they took an immense booty, together with seventy thousand Christians, whom they carried into slavery. The Saracens also attacked the Greeks by sea with equal success ; and this campaign concluded with an exchange of prisoners on both sides.

A conspiracy is formed by Montaffer, and the commander in chief of the Turks.

At the return of the army from this campaign, and in the 247th year of the Hegyra, a resolution was formed to free the musulman empire from a prince, whose government had long been an insupportable yoke, not only to the people in general, but also to the nobility, and even to his own children.

The Caliph still continuing to behave ill to his own son, in his parties where they drank to excess, and at which he obliged him to be present ; the young prince conceived such an aversion to his father, that he took no pains to conceal his sentiments : though Motawakel was informed, how his son stood affected to him, he made not the least step towards a reconciliation with him ; on the contrary, he increased his ill-usage, and, instead of calling him Montaffer, which was his real name, he gave him the nick-name of Monthader, signifying, Him who wishes the Death of his Father. This name having been given on all occasions, the prince was so displeased at hearing it, that at last he resolved actually to deserve it.

He was encouraged in this resolution by the commander of the Turkish troops, who, being

being unable to forget the injury the Caliph MOTAWAKEL had done him in resuming the demesnes he Hegyra 247. had bestowed on him, had long been meditating revenge : he held a conference on this subject with Montasser, who, shutting his ears against the voice of nature and of consanguinity, barbarously assented to the murder of his king, and of his father. He did not in the least hesitate at the commission of this double parricide ; for, by bad example, he had been long hardened in iniquity. Ch. xxi. 861.

This unnatural son therefore complied with Waffif's proposal, and consented he should employ his troops in the execution of the fixed design. The general having conferred with the other Turkish officers on the proposed assassination, each man was ready to join in it ; and it was agreed they should fall on the Caliph the very first day he should drink to excess. Bagher, whom that prince had chosen as his especial guard, was appointed to strike the first blow ; and, in order to commit such a crime, he, for the first time, drew forth from the scabbard the sword which Motawakel had put into his hands.

The conspirators ran no risque of a long delay, in chusing for the effecting their scheme the first day the Caliph should drink beyond the bounds of reason ; for that prince was so fond of liquor as to leave no long intervals between the days he appointed for

MOTAWAKEL his debauches. Motawakel having there-
 Hegyra 247. fore invited his usual boon-companions to a
 Ch. xi. 861.

great feast, they fixed on that day for his
 assassination: they waited till the Caliph
 and all the guests were far gone in liquor;
 and towards the close of the entertainment,
 Bagher, and the Turks that attended him,
 entered the room sword in hand.

The Caliph is
 assassinated.

One of the guests, who was the first that
 espied them, thought it was done by the
 Caliph's order, and expected to see some
 bloody scene which had been contrived by
 that prince; and as the sight was not at first
 so terrible as the appearance of wild beasts,
 whose fury was not easily to be avoided, he
 said in a joking strain, "This is not the day
 of lions, or serpents, or scorpions, but the
 day of swords." The Caliph, who did not
 see the Turks, as he sat with his back to the
 door at which they entered, said to the guest,
 "What do you mean by talking of swords?"
 He said no more, for Bagher and the other
 Turks falling on him mercilessly, slew him
 and all such as attempted to make the least
 resistance.

Fatah his vizir, who was then near him,
 strove to defend his master; but the odds
 against him were too great for him to suc-
 ceed: however, he threw himself into the
 midst of the conspirators, crying out, "O
 Motawakel! I will not survive thee!" A
 Turk took him at his word, and ran his
 sword through the vizir's body.

The

The Caliph's jester, who was present at MOTAWAKEL the entertainment, arose from table the mo- Hegyra 247- Ch. xxi. 861. ment he saw the swords; and hid himself under a canopy of state, whence he could see all that passed. Being terrified at the murder of Fatah, and such as attempted to defend the Caliph, he ventured to creep out of his hiding-place; and, in direct opposition to what the vizir had said, he cried out, "O Motawakel! I would survive thee with all my heart!" He thus escaped the hands of the murderers: or perhaps they gave themselves no concern about the life or death of such a personage.

Immediately after this massacre, Montasser shamefully entered the room where his father lay murdered. As they had cut the body of the wretched Caliph in pieces, Montasser was desirous to know how many parts of the body had been found; one of the slaves having answered six: "Search round," said Montasser, "there should be seven." He was immediately obeyed, and they found one of the Caliph's fingers, which made up the number of parts which the parricide was so anxious about; because he said, Motawakel had related, that in the dream in which he thought he saw Ali, he had received seven blows, which, in his opinion, denoted that the Caliph would be slain and cut into seven pieces. The base parricide therefore strove to make his father's murder pass as a punishment from heaven, to revenge the in-

MOTAWAKEL jury which the Caliph had done to the memory of Ali, the prophet's son-in-law, by prohibiting the pilgrimages performed to his tomb, and by demolishing the monument erected to the memory of Hosein his son, in the plain of Kerbela,

Such was the end of Motawakel, a prince remarkable only for the oddness and ferocity of his temper. It is however asserted, that he came into the world with better dispositions, but that by his inordinate love of wine, he destroyed the good gifts he had received from nature.

This prince left five children, namely, Montasser and Motaz, who attained the throne, and whose reigns were very short; Mowaiad, who was not Caliph; Motamed, who reigned, though he was excluded from the succession to the throne; and Muafseck, who did not reign, but whose children possessed the crown.

The arts and sciences kept their ground during the reign of Motawakel; not that he had the honour of protecting them, but he left the learned in the situation he found them, without discouraging or favouring them; insomuch, that the provision made by his predecessors being sufficient for the progress of study, letters continued to be cultivated in the empire of the Saracens. The learned, indeed, had no access to the throne; but the prince who sat on it was not fit for such society.

There

There was, however, a man famous for his extensive knowledge, who had a great share in the Caliph's friendship; but he was of a profession, which made him necessary to a debauched prince, whose health stood often in need of being mended. This learned man was a physician called Baktishua, whose father named Gabriel Baktishua, had exercised the same profession under some of the preceding Caliphs.

MOTAWAKEL

Hegyra 247.
Ch. ær. 861.

Baktishua a
great favourite
with the
Caliph.

Motawakel admitted this physician to the greatest familiarities; he loved to converse with him on account of his wit and humour; and though some of his jests were very biting, the Caliph did not take offence at them. For example, it is related, that Baktishua going one day to pay his duty to the Caliph, the prince, who had a great deal to say to him, made the physician sit down by him, and began a conversation. The Caliph observing that the fringe round the fore part of the doctor's garment was a little unfewed at the top, during the discourse he employed himself in unripping the rest down to his middle. When he had made an end of speaking upon the subject in hand, he merrily asked, "How it might be known, when a man was arrived to such a degree of madness that he ought to be tied down?" The doctor laughing, immediately replied, "When he tears his physician's garment down to the very girdle." The Caliph, far from being displeased at this li-

MOTAWAKEL berty, laughed heartily at the repartee, and dismissed the doctor with a present of a very fine vest and a sum of money.

Hegyra 247.
Ch. xx. 861.

So noble and generous a proceeding, would have been a plain proof of the goodness and humanity of a prince, who lays himself under an obligation of passing by many things in his inferiors, when he is so imprudent as to give them too great liberties; but as to Motawakel, the great familiarities he allowed to his intimate friends, and particularly to his physician, was rather an effect of the oddness of his humour, than the goodness of his disposition.

The physician
is disgraced.

I shall mention no other proof in support of this observation, than his behaviour on another occasion; when Baktishua, in making a proper return for the honour done him by his sovereign, fell on a sudden into the utmost disgrace.

Motawakel having one day sent word to his physician, that he, together with some of his nobles, would come and dine with him, Baktishua caused a dinner to be prepared suitable to such guests, which was served up with great order and magnificence. He caused his apartments to be adorned with his richest furniture, which shone with gold and silver; and the plate, which was placed on the table, was remarkable both for its beauty and workmanship.

The Caliph seemed highly pleased with his reception; but so soon as he was returned home,

home, he sent officers who seized all the doctor's effects. In a few days the whole was exposed to sale, and Motawakel appropriated to himself all the money they produced. The unhappy physician, who thought himself so great a favourite with his master, was thus in a moment stripped of his whole fortune, and the grief he felt at so fatal an event, soon brought him to the grave.

He was the third physician of that name who had served the Abassian Caliphs. He was a Christian, and whilst he was in favour, had done great services to those of his own communion. He had been very useful, as were also his predecessors, to such of the Caliphs as were lovers of the sciences; for to their labours the Saracens were indebted for many Greek and Latin authors, which they translated into Arabick.

MONTASSER-BILLAH.

The THIRTIETH CALIPH.

THE next day after the assassination of Motawakel, the Turkish officers assembled themselves, and proclaimed Montasser his son to be Caliph. His reign, and his life, were both very short. So execrable a parricide did not deserve to enjoy a length of days.

The Turks assume a right of proclaiming the Caliphs.

Before

MONTASSER.

Hegyra 247.
Ch. ar. 861.

Before I enter upon the particular transactions of this reign, I think it will be proper to take some notice of the manner in which this prince was raised to the throne. The natives of the country did not bestow the crown. Foreigners arrogated to themselves the right of appointing a sovereign to rule the mussulman empire: he was proclaimed by the Turkish band; and the same thing happened at the elevation of Motawakel.

This encroachment on the rights and privileges of the nation, was a consequence of the too great power which the Caliphs had given to that body. Motasssem was the first that employed the Turks in his service; and had taken so great a liking to them, that he quitted his residence at Bagdat, where they were become insupportable through their insolence, and founded the city of Samarrath, there to live undisturbed with his favourite soldiers.

Those Turks gained still more power under the succeeding Caliphs, but chiefly during the reign of Motawakel, who entrusted them with the guard of his person, without reflecting, that by such a conduct he would cast a slur on the whole Arabian nation.

The great credit they gained by being possessed of so honourable a post, by degrees impaired the authority of the Caliphs, and caused all the misfortunes which beset the Abassians.

Abassians. The Turks rendered the dignity of a Caliph contemptible, and the illustrious house of Abbas was sacrificed to their interest, and became the sport of their caprices. We shall soon see them deposing sovereigns at their will, and transferring the crown to such princes as they thought would be most dependent upon them. The power, the fortune, the liberty, even the life of the Caliph, was in their hands; in a word, they assumed the same power in the mussulman empire, as the mayors of the palace had gained in France during the first ages of the French monarchy.

MONTASSER.
Hegyra 247.
Ch. ær. 861.

Hence came the decay of the temporal authority of the Abassian Caliphs. Those princes indeed, after a while, shook off the yoke, and became the uncontrouled masters of their dominions; but the Turks, encouraged by the remembrance of their former success, soon made fresh attempts, by means whereof they insensibly destroyed the power of the Abassians, with which they invested those of their own nation, after having reduced the Caliphate to a bare pontifical dignity, that is to say, almost to nothing.

On the morrow after the proclaiming of Montasser, the Turks held a general assembly, and debated on the present situation of affairs, as if the management of the state had belonged to them. One of their chiefs rising up made a speech to the following effect: "We have deprived Motawakel," said he,

Measures they
take to sup-
port their au-
thority.

" of

MONTASSER
 HEGYIA 247.
 Ch. XL. 861.

“ of his throne, and of his life, and we have proclaimed his son; the people think him guilty, and look on him as an accomplice in his father’s death. That prince will inevitably become odious to his subjects; we shall also be detested by them, for we have given a proof to the nation of our strength, our credit, and the authority we are now possessed of; and this being known, have we not reason to fear? The more formidable we are become, the more are we hated. Can it be said that the prince whom we have placed on the throne, will not strive to clear himself from the suspicion raised against him, of having dipped his hands in his father’s blood? Remorse may spur him on to revenge the murder, that he may appear innocent in the eyes of the people: but supposing that motive not to be sufficiently prevalent with him; can we be assured that Montasser, through jealousy of our power, or fear of the loss of his life, or his throne, will not endeavour, not only to depress, but even to destroy us? Be assured the Arabians are capable of advising him how to take such a step. Our destruction will be resolved on; the whole nation will rise up in arms against us; and how can we avoid ruin in such a juncture? Besides, though Montasser either will not, or dare not, follow the council which the Arabians will probably give him, have we nothing to fear from his two brothers, who are appointed successively to reign after him? Those princes were not accomplices

accomplices with Montasser, nor had they any hand in the death of Motawakel; and can you doubt, if they should ascend the throne, whether they would strive to avenge the murder of their father? If those princes should not do so, will they not have cause to fear us, and will they not endeavour to break our corps? For my part," added the officer, "I think, that if we make the Caliphs tremble, we have at least as much to fear from them."

This speech made a great impression upon the whole assembly; but as it tended only to shew the fears they ought to entertain, and the difficulties they might reasonably expect to meet with, Bagher arose, and begged that officer to give them his opinion, how they might best prevent the inconveniencies they apprehended from the Caliph and his brothers.

"There is but one method to be taken," replied the officer: "we must compel Montasser to exclude his two brothers from the throne; we shall otherwise be exposed to a continual apprehension; but if the Caliph consents, we shall be always masters of the empire."

In consequence of these deliberations the chief officers of the Turkish band went to the Caliph, and moved him to declare null and void the order of Motawakel, by virtue of which Montasser's brothers were to succeed to the throne; and they gilded this bitter pill with a promise of acknowledging his son to be his

MONTASSER.
Hegyra 247.
Ch. 2r. 86s.

They oblige
Montasser's
two brother's
to renounce
the Caliphate.

MONTASSER. his successor, and of causing the oath of allegiance to be taken to him.
 Hegyra 247.
 Ch. ær. 861.

The Caliph was greatly amazed at this proposal. He then found he was no better than a slave to the Turks, and that they would soon set no bounds to their demands; however, he dared not let them know what he thought of their proceedings; but as the matter they proposed to him was of great importance, he desired a day's time to consider of it.

Montasser having maturely reflected on the affair, sent for his two brothers; he told them (with looks full of concern) that he was forced to let them know they must give over all thoughts, and even surrender all right, of succeeding to his dominions. He begged them to be assured that he was by no means the author of so great a piece of injustice, and that it was not the least satisfaction to him to find the crown destined for his son, who was but a child, and who would not be of an age fit to reign at the time he was persuaded he should die; but that the Turks, whose strength, power, and arrogance, they were no strangers to, had forced him to undertake so disagreeable an office. He assured them, that in case of a refusal on their part, neither he nor they could be sure of their lives; he therefore advised them to consult together, and acquaint him with their resolution.

The two princes, full as much amazed as their brother had been at this insolent proposal
 of

of the Turks, were for some time deprived MONTASSER.
of the power of returning any answer; but Hegyra 247.
having a little recovered their surprize, they Ch. ar. 861.
conferred together on this strange demand.
Having well considered all things, and finding
the power of the Turks was predominant, they
resolved to yield to the present exigency; and
in order to save their lives, they signed an un-
conditional abdication of their right and title
to the Caliphate on the demise of Montasser.
This cession seemed to satisfy the Turks, who
afterwards remained very quiet.

The bloody Montasser, who was then sen- Hegyra 248.
sible, that in giving so great countenance to Ch. ar. 862.
the Turkish band, he had forged his own Montasser is
chains, was still more sensibly affected by the terrified at the
cruel remorse he felt on account of the crime thoughts of
he had committed in shedding his father's his parricide.
blood. Though he had coolly considered the
parricide before it was committed, yet, when
the deed was done, the crying sin stared him
full in the face. He used his utmost endea-
vours to impose on the people, touching his
unnatural dealings: he commanded his mini-
sters to write letters unto all the provinces of
the empire, signifying, that the Caliph his
father was assassinated by the procurement
of Fatah, his vizir; and that Fatah had been
punished on the spot, having been himself
slain during the hurry and confusion of that
base enterprize.

But these false pretences gained not the
least credit. The report of this parricide was
already

MONTASSER.
Hegyra 248.
Ch. xi. 862.

already spread far and near ; no person doubted that Montasser was the author of it, and he was never mentioned but with the utmost execrations. His life became a burthen to him ; and being continually disturbed by the gloomy vapours which arose from a reflection on his past crime, he was a stranger to sleep, or if he ever closed his eyes to rest, he was haunted with frightful dreams : the bloody image of his father was present to his imagination, and seemed to reproach him in the bitterest manner.

El Makin reports, that Montasser awaking one night suddenly out of his sleep, was heard to make great moan : one of his servants, who was near, going to the Caliph to enquire the cause, the wretched prince told him, he had just seen Motawakel, and that he had uttered words which made his hair stand an end. “ Alas ! thou hast murdered me,” said he, “ thou hast robbed me, thou hast deprived me of my Caliphate ; but by the living God, thou shalt not long enjoy them, for thou wilt soon be plunged into hell-fire.”

This was the dream, at which the Caliph was so terrified. They endeavoured to cheer him by reminding him that a sensible man would pay no regard to such fancies ; they advised him to go abroad, to take exercise and amuse himself with diversions to dispel those melancholy thoughts which were generated by too sedentary a way of life.

Montasser

Montasser followed their advice; but the MONTASSER. Hegyra 248. Ch. ær. 862. cause of his terrors was too deeply rooted in his imagination to be ever totally eradicated; and, which added to the misfortune, it frequently happened, that in the attempt he made to amuse himself, and drive away his cares, he chanced to meet with objects which added to his remorse, and set his guilt before his eyes in its blackest colours.

To this purpose, Najariſtan has related a very extraordinary fact. Montaffer having one day propoſed to divert himſelf with looking over his wardrobe, they laid before him a fine piece of tapeſtry which had formerly been taken from the palace of the kings of Perſia. It repreſented a man on horſeback, wearing a turban, ſurrounded by a large circle, on which was ſome writing in Perſian characters. None of the perſons preſent being able to read the legend, the Caliph ſent for an interpreter, who had no ſooner caſt his eyes on the writing, than he ſeemed ſtruck with ſurprize, and ſtrove to decline giving the Caliph the interpretation of the words, by ſaying they only related to ſome trifling matters in Perſia. But the prince ſtill inſiſting to be informed, the interpreter again evaded an explanation, by pretending he could not clearly underſtand the meaning of the characters. But Montaffer ſhewing ſigns of anger, he was at laſt forced to obey. The interpreter therefore told him that the legend of the tapeſtry

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Hegyra 248.
Ch. ær. 862

imported in express terms, "I am Siroës *, the son of Chosroës, who killed my father, and enjoyed the kingdom only six months." At this the Caliph turned pale, departed instantly, and shut himself up in his chamber.

The death of
Montasser.

The prince therefore having vainly sought to ease his troubled breast, fell into the deepest melancholy; which would not give way to any of the medicines applied for his relief. In this state he languished during six months, and was then seized with a continual fever, which carried him off in the 248th year of the Hegyra, and the 862d of the Christian æra. Some authors say, that this prince was poisoned by an officer of the Turkish troops; others relate, that having a defluxion in his ear, they put into it some linen dipped in some kind of oil, that his head swelled greatly, and he soon died.

The Caliph's
character.

This Caliph, according to El Makin, was of a middle stature, but excessively corpulent; he had a fair complexion, and very fine eyes. As to his character, the same author says, he was a man of great resolution and courage: he had also a great talent for poetry; and it is even asserted, that some excellent verses of his composing still remain.

* Siroës was the eldest son of Chosroës the Ikd, king of Persia. That prince having given the crown to a younger son, Siroës being enraged, threw his father into prison, and put him to death fifteen days afterwards, with all his children. This fact happened in the six hundred and twenty-eighth year of the Christian æra. Siroës himself died in a short time.

If the inhuman Motawakel had not done MONTASSER.
all in his power to ruin his temper, he might Hegyra 248.
have shone amongst the foremost of the Ch. xi. 862.
Abassian princes ; but the pernicious exam-
ple of the father destroyed every seed of
goodness in the son, and drove him to the
commission of that horrid crime ; the re-
membrance whereof put an end both to his
peace of mind and to his days.

Khondemir relates a passage, which shews,
that this prince was susceptible of friendship
and generosity. One of his officers having
performed to his satisfaction a business on
which he was sent to Egypt, the Caliph, on
his return, asked him what he thought of
that country ; and amongst other things, was
importunate to know if he had not left his
heart behind him.

The officer confessed, that he had seen a Instance of the
woman who had charmed him ; but that, for Caliph's gene-
want of money, he was forced to give over rosity.
all thoughts of an object who had raised a
violent flame in his breast. She was a young
slave of admirable wit and accomplishments,
who sung to a miracle, and was besides a
faultless beauty. He assured the Caliph, that
he would with pleasure have sacrificed his
whole fortune to become master of so inva-
luable a treasure ; and that the reflections he
made on the impossibility of ever possessing
the darling of his soul, filled him with grief,
which would never be ended but with his
life.

MONTASSER.

Hegyta 248.

Ch. 21. 862.

The Caliph was moved at the officer's grief; and having, by means of the further enquiries he made touching the object of his passion, gained all the information he thought necessary, he dismissed the officer, without dropping the least hint of his design. So soon as he was departed, Montasser wrote to the governor of Egypt, and commanded him to make a strict search in all the cities under his government for the slave, (of whom he gave a description agreeable to the account he had received from the officer) and to send her with the utmost speed to Samarath.

His orders were punctually executed; and the fair slave was soon brought to his court. The prince gave her in charge to one of his eunuchs, and commanded him to take care she should be richly dressed, and not to mention her arrival to any person whatsoever, till he should receive further orders from him.

After the slave had been some time at court, Montasser sent for the officer he intended to oblige; and at the same time caused the slave to be concealed behind a screen. The officer being come, the Caliph talked with him a while on indifferent things, and then ordered one of his attendants to bring the slave who had the best voice, that he might be entertained with a song; and having been told that there was one ready to obey his commands, he ordered that she should begin.

The

The moment the officer heard the voice, he seemed confused and like one out of his wits. The Caliph, who took a pleasure in seeing his great perplexity, pressed him to declare the cause of his emotion. "Commander of the faithful," answered the officer, "from the sound of that voice I should think, that either I was in Egypt, or that the finger I mentioned to you is here."

Montasser having caused the slave to cease her strain, asked the officer, if he still loved her? The question perplexed him yet more, as he feared the Caliph had fallen in love with her, upon the account he had given him of her perfections, and had caused her to be brought from Egypt; however, he did not think fit to disguise his sentiments, and said to the prince, "Yes, my lord, I still love her; but as I can no longer entertain any hopes of possessing her, I will endeavour by degrees to stifle the flame she has raised in my breast."

The Caliph then acquainted the officer with the means he had used to oblige him; and told him with great kindness, that he bought the slave with no other view than to make a present of her to him. The prince having caused the finger to come forth, presented her to the officer, and dismissed them both with great marks of friendship. Such a fact will appear the more extraordinary, as sensibility and complacency do not seem compatible with so rough and savage a disposition as that of Montasser.

MOSTAIN.

Hegyra 248.

Ch. ær. 862.

M O S T A I N - B I L L A H.

The THIRTY-FIRST CALIPH.

SO soon as the death of Montasser was made publick, the chiefs of the Turkish troops, who still continued to give law in the state, assembled their body, and held a consultation touching the person they should place on the throne.

Mostain is proclaimed Caliph.

They unanimously excluded the two brothers of Montasser; and then elected for Caliph, Mostain, the son of Mohammed and grandson to the Caliph Motassem. Motaz, Montasser's brother, and son of Motawakel, endeavoured to revive his pretensions to the Caliphate; but he was forced to submit, and the Turkish party remained victorious.

Hegyra 249.

Ch. ær. 863.

So unconstitutional an election, carried by men who had no authority but what they arrogated to themselves, put all things into combustion at Samarath, and even at Bagdat. The Mussulmen, enraged at the insolence of the Turks, took up arms many times in order to depress their power; the latter defended themselves with great resolution. The whole country was full of confusion, and no means could be contrived to put an end to the disorders.

In the midst of these tumults, news was brought that the Alians were in motion, in order

order to set the descendants of Ali on the throne. Jahia ben Omar, a prince of that race, having heard of Mostain's election, and of the disturbances which had ensued thereon, even in the very capital of his dominions, rose up in arms against that prince, and was soon at the head of a strong party, who solemnly proclaimed him Caliph at Cufah, and in the several provinces of Arabian Irak.

MOSTAIN.
Hegyra 250.
Ch. ar. 864.
The Alians
chuse a Caliph
of their house.

Mostain being unable to raise troops to stop the enterprizes of Jahia, on account of the dissention and troubles which prevailed in Samarath and at Bagdat, that Caliph had recourse to Mohammed ebn Abdallah, grandson of the famous Thaher, who, having set up as a sovereign, (as already observed) had transmitted his dominions to his posterity. It does not appear that any of the Caliphs had attempted to destroy that Dynasty, which arose to the great detriment of the Caliph's interest and authority. Mostain was so far from attacking the descendants of Thaher, that, on the contrary, he entered into an alliance with them; and Mohammed, who was then the reigning monarch of that house, was appointed general of the Caliph's forces.

Mostain sends
out against
him Moham-
med, grandson
of Thaher.

He marched out with a strong army of Mussulmen; and repairing to that province where the rebels were most powerful, he acted with such great prudence, that he soon prevailed on the people to submit to their duty.

Jahia is killed,
and his party
defeated.

MOSTAIN.

Hegyra 250.

Ch. ær. 864.

duty. Jahia endeavoured to put a stop to Mohammed's success; he appeared at the head of his troops to dispute the passes with him: but his undertaking did not prove successful. The Caliph's general, who was experienced in the art of war, found means to bring on an action, which proved decisive: Jahia's troops were totally routed, and he was killed on the spot. His head was brought to Mohammed, who forthwith sent it to Mostain. The head was fixed up in a publick place at Samarath, and was afterwards put into a chest at the arsenal.

Another Alian
is proclaimed
in Tabarestan.

Whilst they were employed in destroying one Alian, another arose in Tabarestan, much more capable of supporting his pretensions, than he who had appeared at Cufah. This prince was called Hasan ben Yezid, and had assumed as a surname Al-das-el-Allah, that is to say, "He that invites men to follow truth and justice." This new Caliph was attended with the greatest success: he maintained his dignity nineteen years, and even left it as an inheritance to his brother Mohammed Cassem, who also quietly enjoyed it many years. The great broils which had happened in the very heart of the musulman dominions, were doubtless the cause which prevented the Abassians from putting an end to the enterprizes of that rebellious descendant of Ali.

As to Mostain, it would have been very difficult for him to have taken the least step
against

against that rebel. Division had arisen MOSTAIN.
amongst the Turks, and the sovereign was Hegyra 250.
at a loss which side he should take in order Ch. ær. 864.
to preserve his dignity.

The quarrel arose on the following ac- Hegyra 251.
count. Waffif, the commander of the Ch. ær. 865.
Turkish troops, and Bagher, one of their A quarrel
chief officers, were competitors for some amongst the
favour, which they both solicited at the Turks causes
same time. The Caliph having given the a sedition.
preference to Waffif, Bagher was enraged
at the denial; and having assembled his
friends, he proposed to them not only to
kill his commanding officer, but also to de-
throne the Caliph, and put another in his
stead.

This conference was not so secretly ma-
naged, but that Mostain was informed of it.
The prince, astonished at so strange a reso-
lution, exerted his authority, by causing
Bagher to be seized in the imperial palace.
The Turks of his party ran to arms in order
to release him; and such of them as sided
with Waffif, armed themselves at the same
time, to oppose the designs of the former.

Mostain not knowing how to act in such
a dilemma, held a council with Waffif, and
another Turkish officer called Buga. Those
two captains, who ever since the commence-
ment of the dispute had been bitter enemies
to Bagher, remonstrated to the Caliph that
it was absolutely necessary to make away
with him; for that if he suffered Bagher to
live,

MOSTAIN.

Hegyra 251.

Ch. ær. 865.

live, he would run a risque of losing both his crown and his life. Mostain followed their advice; and it proved to be the source of fresh tumults. Such of the Turks as adhered to Bagher, were seized with fury when they knew their chief had been put to death. The first step they took to revenge the murder, was to plunder part of the city of Samarath: they then came in a tumultuous manner to the palace, and told the Caliph, that if he did not forthwith deliver up Waffif and Buga into their hands, they would lay the whole edifice in ashes by the next morning.

These two officers, who had given the Caliph such advice, on a supposition that when the opposite party were deprived of their leader, they would content themselves with complaining loudly, without taking any further seditious steps, were greatly amazed to see them plunder the city; but they were still more astonished to find, that by his death they were become the chief objects of the fury of that militia.

In so critical a juncture, Waffif and Buga could think of no better expedient to extricate themselves from the danger, than speedily to fly from Samarath: but this step might have proved very hazardous; for if they had left the Caliph in the hands of those desperadoes, they would probably have compelled that prince to proscribe them; or if he refused to comply, they might

might have deposed him, and set up a MOSTAIN.
 Caliph in his stead, who was absolutely de- Hegyra 251.
 voted to them. To prevent these inconven- Ch. ær. 865.
 niencies, therefore, as much as lay in their
 power, they resolved that the Caliph should
 accompany them in their flight; and the
 night after the insurrection, Mostain, Waffif,
 and Buga, secretly departed from Samarath,
 and went to the city of Bagdat.

The mutineers returning to the imperial
 palace the next morning, to demand that
 the chiefs might be delivered up to them,
 were greatly surpris'd to find they had with-
 drawn themselves, together with Mostain.
 They now began to repent of the insult they
 had committed upon the prince, as well as of
 the outrages they had done in the city: they
 feared the Arabians would no longer suffer
 the power to remain in the hands of the
 Turks, and that they would take measures,
 in concert with the Caliph, to shake off a
 yoke which must be insupportable to them.

They were in hopes of bringing matters
 back into the former channel, by laying down
 their arms, and sending deputies to Bagdat,
 to testify to the Caliph their sorrow for what
 had pass'd, and intreat him to return to his
 capital, promising that, for the future, they
 would serve him with zeal and respect, and
 do all in their power to efface the remem-
 brance of their criminal design.

This measure having been resolved on in The Turks
 an assembly of the Turks, they instantly make propo-
sals, which
sent are rejected.

MOSTAIN.
Hegyra 251.
Ch. ar. 865.

sent deputies to Bagdat, but to no purpose; for they were denied audience; and Mostain did not so much as know that such a deputation had been sent, till it was too late to remedy the misfortunes which arose from that denial.

The governor of Bagdat was the sole cause of the violent steps which were taken by the Turks on this occasion. It was the same Mahomet, the grandson of Thaher, to whom that government had been given, as a reward for the victory he obtained at Cufah over the rebel Jahia. On his return, the Caliph confirmed to him the sovereignty of Chorasan, which his grandfather had usurped from the Abassians; and moreover, to induce him to reside in his dominions, he bestowed on him the government of Bagdat, where he ruled like an independent monarch. Mohammed, who was well pleased to find the Caliph in his power, resolved to keep him in his hands: to this end he gave a bad reception to the deputies; and notwithstanding their earnest entreaties to gain an audience, the governor not only denied their request, but even dismissed them very roughly.

Hegyra 252.
Ch. ar. 866.

They were therefore obliged to return to Samarath, with no other answer than an account of the ill treatment they had received from the governor. So insolent a slight of their proposals, raised the indignation of the Turks, who resolved to depose Mostain,

Mostain, and raise to the throne Motaz, MOSTAIN.
whom they had so lately deprived of his Hegyra 252.
right to the crown. Ch. ær. 866.

It was therefore soon published in all parts Therebels de-
of Samarath, that Mostain, for certain good pose Mostain,
causes, was deposed from the Caliphate; and proclaim
and on the same day the Turkish band Motaz in his
placed Motaz on the throne. There were stead.
at this time two Caliphs; the one at Sama-
rath, the other at Bagdat, both of them sup-
ported by Turks of different factions; but
the former was by much the strongest, and
soon got the better of the latter.

So soon as Motaz was proclaimed Caliph,
the Turks, whose creature he was, obliged
him speedily to raise a body of troops, that
he might march to Bagdat, and besiege Mos-
tain and his adherents. That prince, whose
interest it was to take all possible measures
to secure to himself a crown he had been al-
ready so near losing, gave immediate orders
to assemble an army: the Turks, who were
personally interested in the undertaking, for-
warded the preparations to the utmost of
their power; and in a short time a nume-
rous body of forces was made ready, which
he caused to march to Bagdat, under the
command of Muaffek his brother.

Though the Caliph of Bagdat was in-
formed of the preparations that were making
against him; yet, to the astonishment of all
men, he remained inactive, without providing
for his defence. The governor himself, who
was

MOSTAIN.
Hegyra 252.
Ch. xi. 866.

was a warlike man, seemed full as easy as the Caliph : in the mean time, the army of Motaz continually approached ; and at last intelligence was brought, that they would shortly set down before Bagdat.

*Mostain is
 abandoned
 by his party.*

The Turks who had accompanied Mostain to that city, together with Waffif and Buga their chiefs, openly murmured at the indolence of that prince, who was about to expose them to fall a sacrifice to the troops of Motaz ; but finding their complaints were disregarded by the governor, and even by the Caliph, they resolved to treat with the enemy : they therefore sent messengers to the general, and offered to acknowledge Motaz as sole and lawful Caliph, if he would cease all hostilities against them.

The governor of Bagdat, who probably deferred submitting to Motaz until some person had led the way, followed the example of the Turks. He wrote to Muaffek, that if the Caliph of Samarath would promise to continue him in the government of Bagdat, and at the same time engage to make no attempt on Mostain's life, he would readily take the oath of allegiance to him, and would also endeavour to prevail on Mostain to resign the Caliphate. The governor comprehended Waffif and Buga in the treaty, and represented, that as those two officers had the greatest influence over Mostain, and had engaged to induce him to make his abdication,

lication, assurances ought to be given them MOSTAIN.
as to the safety of their persons.

Hegyra 252.
Ch. ar. 866.

These terms having been offered to Mu-
affek, he forthwith sent a courier to Sama-
rath, to communicate them to Motaz : that
He abdicates
the Caliphate.

prince accepted them, and consequently
withdrew his forces. Mostain was therefore
obliged to resign the Caliphate to Motaz, and
to lead a private life. They appointed for
his residence the magnificent palace of Bag-
dat, and assigned him a revenue suitable to
his birth and condition ; however, as Motaz
always mistrusted that prince, he at first or-
dered him to be strictly guarded : in a short
time, having entertained some suspicions of
him, (but whether with or without founda-
tion, authors do not say) he caused him to
be brought to Samarath, and gave him in
charge to Saïd his vizir. That minister be-
ing sensible, that the Caliph's design was to
put it out of Mostain's power to disturb him,
found means to make away with him. His death.

The account given by El Makin of this
Caliph's death, is somewhat different. He
says, that the prince having resigned his dig-
nity, Motaz was proclaimed at Bagdat ; that
Mostain was afterwards carried to a castle,
where Motaz caused his head to be cut off.
The person who was appointed to perform
the execution, being returned to Samarath
with the head, went to the palace to pre-
sent it to the Caliph. Motaz was then play-
ing at chess, and they interrupted him to
let

MOTAZ.

Hegyra 252.
Ch. ar. 866.

let him know Mostain's head was brought. The Caliph coolly answered, " Let them wait till I have finished my game." Having made an end of it, he arose, and went and viewed the head, and seemed well pleased at the sight: he afterwards ordered it to be buried.

Mostain reigned only three years and some months. He was about one-and-thirty years old. We are not told, whether he left any children or not.

M O T A Z - B I L L A H.

The THIRTY-SECOND CALIPH.

Motaz confirms Mohammed in the sovereignty of Chorasán.

MOTAZ having been proclaimed Caliph at Bagdat, and at Samarath, forthwith shewed his gratitude for the service Mohammed had done him, in not taking up arms to defend Mostain, (who had fled for shelter to his government) and in compelling that prince to abdicate the Caliphate. He confirmed to him the absolute sovereignty of Chorasán, and the possession of the government of Bagdat.

The new Caliph finding himself in peaceable possession of the mussulman throne, made serious reflections on what had passed in the empire during many years. The death of his father, his exclusion from the Caliphate, the election of Mostain in his stead,

stead, and finally the deposition of that Caliph, after which he had been restored to his rights; all which revolutions were brought about by the intrigues of the Turks, thoroughly convinced him, that if speedy measures were not taken, the Caliphs would be always subject to the will and ambition of that insolent soldiery, who, though foreigners, had presumed to intermeddle in the government of the state.

To remedy this inconvenience, Motaz formed a design, absolutely to free himself from this militia. He proposed in the first place to destroy the chief officers; after which he was in hopes he should meet with no difficulty in breaking that corps. He had a long conference on this subject with Ahmed ben Ismael, whom he appointed vizir at his accession to the throne. That minister absolutely dissuaded him from executing the design: he shewed him that the attempt might be attended with very fatal consequences; and that he himself might perhaps fall a sacrifice to the fury of those desperate men, ere he would be able to diminish their power.

The Caliph therefore gave over the enterprise, and suddenly fell into the contrary extreme; for he contracted a friendship with Waffif, and the other commanders of that body. He gave them considerable posts, and assigned them large revenues, which only

His vizir dissuades him from the design he had formed of breaking the Turkish corps.

CH. XXX. 866.

MOTAZ.

Hegyra 252.

Ch. ær. 866.

Motaz causes
his brother to
be put to
death.

served to increase their authority, and render them more formidable.

He was soon made sensible of the fault he had committed. As he was naturally apt to go from one extreme to another, he suspected his brother Mouiad, because he was a favourite with the people, and might easily have put himself at the head of a party: on this suspicion he determined to cause him to be apprehended. The Turks, who loved that young prince, shewed their displeasure on that account, and even threatened to break open the prison where he was confined. The Caliph prevented them by putting him to death; and that the murder might not be laid to his charge, he sent some persons to the prison, who enclosed the prince in a large skin of ermine, well furred*, till they stifled him. When he was dead, the Caliph caused him to be exposed to publick view, that all the world might imagine he died a natural death.

Hegyra 253.

Ch. ær. 867.

This expedient answered the Caliph's purpose; and the Turks, not suspecting that prince was guilty of the death of his brother, suffered this event to pass quietly over:

* Mouiad dying in prison, it was reported in Bagdat, that Motaz commanded those that guarded Mouiad, to lay him naked and bound in the snow, that he might die with the cold; and that the Caliph being informed of the report, caused the body to be wrapped up in the skin of an ermine, and exposed to publick view, to persuade the world that he died a natural death. D'Herbelot, p. 645.

but in the beginning of the following year, MOTAZ.
 they shewed their discontent on account of Hegyra 253.
 their pay, which was retarded a few days. Ch. ar. 867.
 This delay caused an insurrection, which had The Turks
 like to have put the whole city of Samarath mutiny.
 in a combustion : their officers strove in vain
 to appease them ; they would not hear them
 speak. Waffif their commander, who was
 then at court, went to them immediately, by
 the Caliph's order, reckoning that his pre-
 sence would put a stop to the mutiny : but
 they laughed at his remonstrances ; and the
 commander attempting to put his authority
 in execution, they fell on him and slew him.
 In the heighth of their fury they threatened
 to plunder the city ; it became therefore ab-
 solutely necessary, to find the most speedy
 means of satisfying them ; and, by the help
 of a large sum of money, an end was put
 to the revolt.

This mutinous behaviour, and these me- Hegyra 254.
 naces of the Turks, so plainly manifested Ch. ar. 868.
 their contempt of the Caliph's authority, Buga retires,
 that he was highly displeased with that sol- which causes
 diery ; and in particular with their officers, a new insur-
 for not introducing amongst them a strict rection.
 discipline, which they stood so much in need
 of : however, he strove to conceal his dis-
 pleasure. But one of the chief officers of
 that corps soon perceived, that his presence
 was no longer so agreeable to the Caliph, as
 it had formerly been ; he therefore resolved
 to absent himself from court, and retire, fore-

MOTAZ.

Hegyra 254.

Ch. xi. 868.

seeing that the Turks would revolt on account of his absence, and that he might thereby be furnished with an opportunity of punishing the Caliph for his coldness.

Things fell out as he foresaw. Buga, (for so the officer was called) who was surnamed the Senior, to distinguish him from his younger brother, who had a command in the same body; Buga, I say, suddenly departed from Samarath, and retired to the city of Mossul, where he waited for the effects which he doubted not would be produced by his flight; and he soon received advice of the great disorders his soldiers had committed.

So soon as the Turks were informed of his retreat, they ran to arms, and advanced even to the imperial palace, where they insolently plundered great part of what they found in the apartments, and then retired to their quarters. Buga was no sooner informed of this transaction, than he returned to Samarath with some new companies of Turks; he caused a report to be spread, that he was come to punish the factious, whose insurrection he found was to be laid to his charge.

Buga is defeated and killed.

The Caliph, who had received private intelligence, that Buga's real design was to make an attempt upon his person, appointed an officer of distinction named Walid-al-Magrebi, who was a person of great credit amongst the Mussulmen, to provide for his defence. That officer brought over a great number

number of persons to the Caliph's interest, MOTAZ.
and at last assembled a body of troops sufficient to face the Turks. He marched up to Buga, and attacked him with so much vigour and success, that the rebels were defeated, and their commander was taken prisoner. Walid forthwith sent the news of this victory to the Caliph, who ordered Buga's head to be cut off and brought to him. This order was executed without delay, and the sedition was for a while appeased.

The death of Buga caused the Turks seriously to reflect on the treatment they would certainly meet with from the Caliph, in case they suffered him to improve the advantage he had lately gained; but on the other hand they were at a loss to determine what measures they should take in order to keep him in awe, and prevent him from using them with severity. They were indeed all stout men, and able and willing to fight on occasion; but that was not enough: it was necessary to foresee events at a great distance, to avoid them, or at least to be capable of artfully turning them to their own advantage. These things were not to be expected from rude soldiers; it was therefore necessary to appoint a chief, able to form operations, and preside over the execution of them, which the multitude was in no wise able to do. They were then thoroughly sensible of the loss they had sustained by the death of

Hegyra 255.
Ch. ær. 869.

The Turks
chose Saïed to
be their chief.

MOTAZ.

Hegyra 255.
Ch. ær. 869.

Waffif, of Bagher, and of Buga; and they strove in some sort to repair it, by appointing for their chief commander Saled, the son of the same Waffif; and they chose for his colleague in the command Mohammed, the son of the same Buga, whose head the Caliph had commanded to be struck off, after he had been defeated by Walid.

This election was no sooner over, than they raised new disturbances in the state; their complaints always turned upon the withholding their pay: and it is amazing, that after the first inconvenience they felt from them, proper measures were not taken to break those mutineers, in case they had thought fit to get rid of them, or to furnish money for their punctual payment, if they resolved to keep them on foot.

But the Caliph and his ministers were unhappily in a kind of lethargy, which prevented them from using the due means of preserving the peace and tranquillity of the state: this negligence was the cause of the Caliph's destruction. The Turks having, with their accustomed insolence, demanded their money, they were refused, and told there was none for them. This answer, so unlikely to prove satisfactory to a set of mutineers, threw the Turks into a rage, and induced them to commit the greatest excesses.

They commit
fresh vio-
lences.

They went in a body to attack the vizir in his house; they ill-treated him, and took away

away all they could lay their hands on. MOTAZ.
 From thence they marched to the imperial Hegyra 255.
 palace, and, having seized all the avenues, Ch. 27. 869.
 appointed some of their officers to go to the
 Caliph's apartment, and force him either to
 give them their pay or resign the crown.

These officers performed their orders with They kill the
 as much brutality as their principals could Caliph.
 desire. Having met with a denial from the
 prince, they forcibly pulled him down from
 his throne; and dragging him about by the
 feet, they beat him most unmercifully, and
 finally obliged him to resign the Caliphate.

The wretched Caliph died in a short time :
 but historians do not agree in the accounts
 they give of his death. Some say that the
 Turks shut him up in a stove, and he
 having asked for something to drink, they
 gave him iced water mixed with poison.
 Others relate, that they banished him to
 Bagdat, where they gave him meat, but de-
 nied him any drink, and that at last he died
 of thirst.

El Makin tells us, that they kept him
 three days without either food or liquor; and
 afterwards shut him up in a cellar, where he
 was found dead the next morning.

This prince died about the middle of the
 fourth year of his reign, aged only twenty
 years. He was a very voluptuous man, says
 El Makin, and heeded nothing but his plea-
 sures, for the sake of which he totally neg-
 lected all business of the state.

MOTAZ.

Hegyra 255.
Ch. ær. 869.Prodigious
avarice of the
Caliph's mo-
ther.

Abu'l Faragius relates something very extraordinary, touching the mother of this prince, whose name was Cahibah. This woman was possessed of immense treasures, which she kept concealed at Samarath, where she resided, and where she was, more than once, a witness to the outrages committed by the Turks on her son, for want of their pay; and on the last occurrence, in which the Caliph lost his life, it was in her power to have quelled the insurrection, only by sacrificing a small portion of her riches: but this avaricious and unnatural mother chose rather to see her son perish, than to part with the least trifle to save him.

The Caliph who succeeded Motaz, forced this princess to confess where her treasure was hid; and they found, according to Abu'l Faragius, several millions of gold, a bushel-full of emeralds, as many of the finest and largest sort of pearls, and half a bushel of red hyacinths: and though possessed of such an heap of riches, the cruel parent suffered her son to be deprived of the crown, for want of money to preserve it,

MOTHADI-

M O T H A D I - B I L L A H. MOTHADI.

The THIRTY-THIRD CALIPH.

Hegyra 255.Ch. ar. 869.

MOTHADI was the son of Wathek-Billah, who possessed the mussulman throne immediately after Motasssem. He was, like his predecessor, raised to the Caliphate by the Turks; and like him, he fell a sacrifice to their brutality.

This prince was formed to reign in better times. Born with those qualities which adorn a throne, and do honour to humanity, he would have revived amongst the Mussulmen the golden days of Omar and of Mamon; but having attempted to correct the insolent behaviour of seditious men, they revolted against him, and put him to a cruel death, after he had reigned about eleven months.

The divisions which had so long prevailed in his dominions, having brought on a general confusion, the Caliph, with great spirit, undertook in person to remedy so great a misfortune. This prince therefore gave notice that, for the future, his people should not apply for redress to his ministers, but to himself. He was resolved to enquire into their differences and disputes, and to strive to accommodate them: he also brought the expences of his household within due bounds; and

Methods Mo-
thadi takes to
correct the er-
rors which
had crept into
the govern-
ment.

MOTHADI.

Hegyra 255.

Ch. 2r. 869.

and far from following the example set by the generality of his predecessors, who were always in want of money to pay their troops, whilst they spent immense sums in feasts, and in useless pomp and ceremonies, he made such prudent regulations in the management of his revenue, that he found, from the beginning, it was sufficient to answer all his wants, without the taxes which had been usually laid on the subjects: he therefore suppressed the greatest part of them, and thereby gained the hearts of all his people.

Besides these regulations, which were so advantageous to his subjects, he corrected many errors which had crept in amongst the Mussulmen. He prohibited all games of hazard, the use of wine, and dances. He drove out of his dominions the stage-players, buffoons, and such sort of persons: he put away the elephants, wild beasts, and even the dogs for hunting; in a word, all that had before occasioned great expences in the palace of the Caliphs.

The things which were prohibited by this new order, were for the most part forbidden by the mussulman law, namely the Koran; but religion was long since become no more than an empty name amongst them. Mothadi, who was a very zealous man, and practised all the duties of his religion with the utmost exactness, revived the veneration which every good Mahometan ought to bear

bear to the book of the prophet. He commonly carried it about with him; and when he sat in his tribunal, (as was his custom) to administer justice to his subjects, he always had the Koran in his hand, and judged the several causes according to the decisions contained in that book.

This prince, who was so just, so rational, and so compassionate to the wretched, must have been filled with indignation, when he heard that the extreme avarice of his predecessor's mother had proved the cause of that Caliph's death. He was struck with horror at the account of the immense riches which that greedy woman had concealed. He caused her to appear before him; and compelled her to confess where she had buried them. She was very unwilling to disclose a secret which so nearly touched her, but she was forced to obey: and having pointed out the place, the treasure already mentioned in the close of the reign of the unfortunate Motaz, was accordingly found in a strong vault under-ground. The prince thought he could not inflict on her a more severe punishment, than to deprive her of her darling riches, which she was so unable to apply to proper uses.

This valuable confiscation was a fund almost inexhaustible in the hands of a prince who was always frugal, except in relieving the unfortunate, whose number he had already diminished, by taking off the greatest part

METHADI.
Hegyra 255.
Ch. ær. 869.

Hegyra 256.
Ch. ær. 870.

He deprives
Cahibah of
the treasure
she had amassed.

MOTHADI. part of the taxes. The methods he took to retrench all that favoured of luxury, had Hegyra 256. also procured him large sums of money ; so Ch. ær. 870. that he had sufficient to answer all the purposes of the state, without being obliged to oppress his subjects. As to his personal expences, they were very inconsiderable : in respect to which historians tell us, that the Caliph, after Omar's example, took but a very small sum out of the treasury for his own maintenance.

He proposes to introduce strict discipline amongst the Turkish troops. Having thus regulated his court and his state, Mothadi proposed to introduce a strict discipline amongst the Turkish troops ; but it was too late for the making such an attempt, as that corps was become very powerful : he resolved, however, to restrain their insolence, and keep them within due bounds ; but this only drew on him their resentment, and indeed, all his endeavours proved unsuccessful and most unfortunate.

They revolt. Bankial, one of the principal Turkish officers, having committed a capital crime, the Caliph caused him to be apprehended, and resolved to punish him, to set an example to the rest of that body : but so soon as the Turks heard of the imprisonment of that officer, they rose up in arms, and came in a tumultuous manner to the imperial palace, loudly demanding that the prisoner should be set at liberty.

The Caliph, unmoved at their clamours, boldly refused to satisfy the mutineers ; and
as

as they began to attack his guard, in order to force their way into the palace, Mothadi, to deprive them of all hopes of releasing Bankial, caused his head to be cut off and thrown down amongst the Turks, who still obstinately continued their attack.

MOTHADI.
Hegyra 256.
Ch. ær. 870.

The fight of the bloody head was so far from intimidating them, that it added to their fury, which was still augmented, when Tagabri, the son of Bankial, put himself at the head of the rebels, to revenge himself on the Caliph : they redoubled their attacks ; and as some troops arrived to reinforce the palace-guard, a set battle ensued before they could force their way : however, at last they gained entrance, and ascended to the Caliph's apartment, still fighting with such as defended the stair-case.

The intrepid Mothadi, preserving his dignity in the midst of this tumult, appeared in person with the Koran hanging on his breast, and his sword in his hand : in this manner he advanced up to the Turks, with such men as were about him, and a fresh action happened, in which the Turks gained the advantage : they slew or wounded all that attempted to defend the Caliph ; and at last easily seized that prince, who was scarce able to make any resistance, on account of two very considerable wounds he had received.

These desperadoes treated the Caliph in a most unworthy manner. They required him, in terms full of insolence, to resign the Caliphate.

MOTHADI.

Hegyra 256.

Ch. ær. 870.

Caliphate. They even cruelly beat him, to force him to surrender that dignity; but Mothadi, constant in the midst of so great adversity, absolutely refused to comply: they therefore continued their outrages on his person, till the arrival of one of Bankial's relations, who put an end to the uproar, by stabbing the Caliph with a dagger, of which he died on the spot.

The Caliph is
killed.

His character.

Such was the end of one of the most virtuous Caliphs that ever sat on the mussulman throne. Historians concur in acknowledging his eminent qualities. He had a noble soul, and an elevated understanding. The great sweetness of his disposition, and his natural love of justice and equity, added a dignity and lustre to his actions, and even to his person, and recalled to the minds of his people the halcyon days of former reigns.

According to El Makin, this prince was low of stature, and of a handsome countenance. His complexion was brown, the fore part of his head bald, and his beard long and thick.

MOTA-

M O T A M E D - B I L L A H.

MOTAMED.

The THIRTY-FOURTH CALIPH.

Hegyra 256.

Ch. æt. 870.

AFTER the death of Mothadi, the Turks placed on the throne Motamed ebn Motawakel. This election was the last act of power which they executed in the sarracenick empire; for the authority they usurped there, was entirely destroyed under the reign of this Caliph. It was however only for a time; for in the sequel they regained their influence, and their chiefs, for the most part, formed Dynasties, which were afterwards established in Chorasán, Khwarezm, Egypt, and even in the Indies.

Motamed was the son of Motawakel, and brother to Montasser and Motaz, his predecessors in the Caliphate. The father of this prince did not intend he should possess the throne; on the contrary, he had formally excluded him from it: but fortune determined otherwise, and he was crowned by the same faction which dethroned his cousin Mothadi.

The affairs of the empire put on a new Motamed's character. face under the reign of this Caliph; not that he was possessed of any talents to qualify him for governing. "He was a debauchee," says El Makin, "that loved gaming and diversions, for which he neglected the government

MOTAMED.
Hegyra 256.
Ch. ær. 870.

ment of the state." But he was so fortunate, as to place his whole authority in the hands of a prince equally able and prudent, and in all respects well qualified to rule a nation, either in war or in peace.

It was his own brother named Muaffek ; like him also excluded by his father from the succession to the Caliphate. And though he did not attain that dignity, yet he was invested with such absolute power in his brother's life-time, that it might well be said it was he that reigned.

End put to
the authority
of the Turkish
band.

We are not told, what measures he took to lower the insolence of the Turkish band, and by degrees to destroy their authority. Historians only say, that he undertook so difficult a task, and in time performed it : and, in order to prevent that unruly corps from raising any future disturbances in the capital, he formed means to employ them in a foreign war, which he resolved to carry on against the Zinghians, who about two years before had made an inroad into some provinces of the mussulman state, of which they kept possession by force of arms.

Expedition
against the
Zinghians.

Hegyra 257.
Ch. ær. 871.

This people came from Zanguebar, a province on the east coasts of Africa. They were followers of an impostor who had assumed the name of Mahomet, and pretended to be descended from that prophet. As he was master of all the talents necessary for seduction, he soon gained a great number of adherents, whom he caused to take up

arms by virtue of his own authority ; and he then assumed the title of prince of the Zingians.

MOTAMED.
Hegyra 257.
Ch. æl. 871.

This impostor taking advantage of the intestine divisions which prevailed in the musulman empire, about the 255th year of the Hegyra, got footing in the country of Cufah, and Basorah ; and extending his conquests, he got possession of almost all Arabian Irack. And he so established his power in his newly acquired dominions, that he transmitted them to his posterity.

At the time Motamed ascended the throne, the Zinghians, not contented with their former conquests, strove to encrease the bounds of their territories. And in a short time intelligence arrived, that they had actually entered the frontiers of Persia, and committed terrible ravages there.

Muaffek having taken the necessary measures to preserve the peace of the capital, resolved to march out against that people, and subdue them. To this end he raised a numerous army, in which he incorporated the whole Turkish militia, in order to send them from Samarath, where they had long been the authors of such great troubles.

Hegyra 258.
Ch. ær. 872.

This expedition was not successful : spight of Muaffek's consummate skill in the art of war, he could gain no advantage over those Africans : twice he fought them in a pitched battle, and was as many times defeated ; in-somuch that he stood in need of all his ex-

MOTAMED.

Hegyra 258.

Ch. ar. 872.

perience to prevent his troops from being totally routed. He was therefore at last obliged to come to an accommodation with them; after which he returned to Samarath, and diligently applied himself to the management of the state.

Hegyra 259.

Ch. ar. 873.

End of the
Dynasty of the
Taherians.

About the same time a revolution happened, which put an end to the Dynasty of the Taherians, who had maintained themselves in Chorasán many years. Mahomet ebn Taher was then the reigning prince of that Dynasty. For some time he kept up the glory of his ancestors, but having afterwards given way to excesses, he totally neglected his affairs.

Rise of the
Dynasty of the
Soffarites.

He had, to his great misfortune, neighbours who were active and vigilant, and who were also extremely desirous of signalizing themselves by feats of arms, and of subduing such countries as they might be able to form into a sovereignty. His most dangerous neighbour was Jacob ebn Leitz, who was afterwards founder of the Dynasty of the Soffarites.* This prince, who had but just

* The Dynasty of the Soffarites, took its name from the trade which was exercised by Leitz, chief of that family. As he had been a tinker, after he followed the trade of war, he was desirous to preserve a remembrance of his former condition: he therefore took the surname of Soffar, which signifies a workman in brass, or a tinker. From whence his descendants were called Soffarites. They formed a Dynasty, after the extinction of the Taherians, and signalized themselves in Asia, where they conquered the provinces of Chorasán, Tabaristán, and Sejestán. They fixed the seat of their empire in the cities of Merou and Nishabour, and were at last destroyed by the Samanides, as will be made appear in the sequel.

entered

entered upon his grand project, had gained MOTAMED. possession of the province of Sejestan. Having Hegyra 259. reflected how easily Chorasan might be con- Ch. x. 873. quered, as it was governed by a prince so incapable of making a defence, he resolved to undertake that enterprize.

He therefore marched at the head of his troops, and entered Chorasan. Mahomet, who was then at Nishabour, his capital, was greatly surpris'd at the news: but, instead of putting himself into a proper posture of defence, he only sent Jacoub, one of his chief officers, to enquire by what authority he presumed to enter his dominions with an armed force? and whether he did so by virtue of a commission under the Caliph's hand and seal?

Jacoub drew his cymetar, and shewing it to the officer, returned this answer: "Go tell your master this is my commission;" and without further delay he marched on to Nishabour, which he took almost as soon as he sat down before it. Mahomet abandoned his capital on the approach of the enemy's army; but Jacoub sent a body of forces after him, by whom he was so warmly pursued, that he was taken: his whole family were also seized, and their effects confiscated; and the victor pushing on his conquests, entered Tabarestan, of which he gained possession.

Though the destruction of the Taherian Hegyra 260. Dynasty was of no great advantage to the Ch. x. 874. Caliph, as another had arisen in its stead,

MOTAMED. yet the news of Mahomet's defeat gave great pleasure to the court of Samarath. As to Hegyra 260. Ch. ær. 874. Jacoub, they proposed to deal with him as time and circumstances would permit.

The Caliph They did not therefore take the least step quits Sama- to disturb that prince in his new conquest; rath, and re- and nothing passed that year of greater mo- turns to Bag- ment, than the change of the Caliph's place dat. of residence, and the removal of his court. He quitted the city of Samarath, where the Abassians had constantly resided from the time of Motassem who founded it, and went to dwell at Bagdat, which became once more the capital of the mussulman empire.

Hegyra 261. The Caliph had not long been arrived at Ch. ær. 875. his new abode, when he took measures to regulate the succession to the throne. He **He regulates the succession.** appointed his son Giaffer to be his successor, and directed, that on his son's death, his uncle Muaffek should possess the crown: but this disposition proved ineffectual.

Jacoub revolts from the Caliph. Whilst the courtiers were yet employed in providing themselves proper conveniencies in Bagdat, they were greatly alarmed by a prince, of whom they had not yet entertained the least fear. It was the same Jacoub, the conqueror of Mohammed, who had taken up arms, and was approaching at the head of his troops.

Hegyra 262. This prince pursued his conquests, made Ch. ær. 876. himself master of all Arabian Irak, and maintained himself there in a state of independency; but he had not before presumed openly

openly to throw off the Caliph's authority. MOTAMED. Hegyra 262. Ch. ær. 876.
 Emboldened by success, he took off the masque, and appeared in arms against Motamed. The conqueror did not lose time in plundering the frontiers; he boldly marched strait to Bagdat, resolved to attack the sovereign in his capital.

The news of his march threw that city into the utmost confusion. The inhabitants, who were almost defenceless, thought they already saw the enemy in possession of their effects, and the whole city in a flame; but the brave Muaffek soon delivered them from their fears. By his great care and activity, a considerable army was raised, and in a very short time in a condition to march: he put himself at the head of the troops, and went forth to face Jacob, and went forth to face Jacob.

These two princes, with their armies, being in sight of each other, fought a battle, and each of them did all that prudence and experience could suggest to gain the victory: at last, after many onsets given, and sustained with the greatest intrepidity, Jacob's troops were broke: the general vainly strove to restore the battle; his troops were put to a total rout, and he was forced to take to flight. Muaffek defeats him in a battle.

This advantage was followed by another, which Muaffek deemed almost equal to a victory: it was the death of Musa, the son of Buga, one of the chief officers of the Turkish corps. The loss of this officer, added to the

MOTAMED.
Hegyra 263.
Ch. ær. 877.

wife and timely measures which Muaffek had taken to restrain that body, so diminished their power, that they were soon forced entirely to submit to the Caliphs.

By the defeat of so powerful an enemy, and the submission of the seditious Turks, tranquillity was restored to Bagdat, and great joy diffused over the whole court; however, it was a little abated by the intelligence which arrived from several places almost at the same time.

A report was spread that Jacoub ebn Leitz, in hopes of repairing the loss he sustained in his late defeat, had set on foot another considerable army, and was preparing to march directly to Bagdat, in order to besiege that city; however, all this great preparation came to nothing. Jacoub indeed began his march, but on the way he was seized with a violent cholick, which carried him off in a few days. He left his dominions to Amrou ebn Leitz his brother, who was the second prince of the Dynasty of the Soffarites. Amrou found means to come to an accommodation with Motamed, and upon such terms, that the Caliph not only pardoned the treason which he and his brother had committed by their usurpations, but also granted and confirmed to Amrou the possession of the country they had usurped by letters patents under his hand and seal.

Ahmet becomes sovereign of Egypt.

This prince might possibly find it necessary to grant such advantageous conditions to Amrou,

rou, that he might be the better enabled to MOTAMED: Hegyra 264. Ch. x. 877. face a powerful enemy who rose up in Egypt, and who threatened to deprive the Caliph of the sovereignty of that vast province; in which design he actually succeeded. This rebel was called Ahmet ben Tholon, and was founder of a Dynasty known in history by the name of the Tholonites. The Abassians had appointed him governor of Egypt. Having for many years governed that province, under the authority of the sovereigns who employed him, he grew weary of dependance, and resolved to shake off the yoke, so soon as he should be strong enough to attempt it. At last he openly declared himself, and so well secured the possession of his newly-acquired dominions, that he transmitted them to his posterity.

Whilst the rebels were strengthening themselves in Egypt, news was brought to the Caliph's court of the loss they had sustained The Greeks gain an advantage over the Mussulmen. on the side of Greece. Abdallah ebn Rashid, governor for the Caliph of a province bordering on the Grecian dominions, made an irruption into the territories of the Greeks, slew the inhabitants of most of the towns, and carried off their effects. As he was retiring from a place called Badandurium, the inhabitants of Seleucia and some neighbouring places, joined their forces; and having put themselves under the command of men skilled in the art of war, they marched in quest of the Mussulmen, with a resolution to

MOTAMED.

Hegyra 264.

Ch. ær. 877.

charge them, in hopes of recovering the booty. They surpris'd them in a narrow pass, and so surrounded them, that it was presumed not one of them could escape: however, five hundred of the most resolute amongst the Mussulmen, cut their way through the Greeks sword in hand, and rode off full speed; all the rest were slain, except a few of the chief officers, who were taken prisoners, and sent to Constantinople.

As this misfortune was solely owing to the governor's misconduct, he would have been severely punished if he had been in the Caliph's power; but they found he was amongst the number of the prisoners: nothing therefore remained but to deplore the loss of the unhappy Mussulmen, who perished on that occasion.

Hegyra 265.

Ch. ær. 878.

Ahmet takes
many towns.

The revolt of Ahmet ben Tholon, was an affair of much greater consequence. The Caliph thought he inflicted a severe punishment on that rebel, in causing curses to be denounced against him in the publick prayers. Ahmet, who only laughed at a bare ceremony, which in no wise diminished his authority, shewed the court of Bagdat that he was provided of the means of making himself formidable: he took up arms, and attacked many considerable places of the mussulman empire. His first design was to have fallen upon Aleppo, to revenge himself on Siman, governor of that city, who was his personal enemy; but having been in-
formed,

formed, that this officer was at Antioch, he MOTAMED.
 went to seek him there, and laid siege to the Hegyra 265.
 place. The inhabitants made a gallant de- Ch. ær. 878.
 fence, but they were forced to yield to su-
 perior strength ; and the vindictive Ahmet,
 having made himself master of the town,
 caused strict search to be made for Siman,
 and so soon as he found the governor, he
 caused him to be put to death. From thence
 he led his victorious troops to Aleppo, which
 he also took, after a long siege ; and pushing
 on his conquests, he seized Damascus, Emeffa,
 Hamathan, Kennefrin, and, in short, all the
 places which he found on his way even to
 Taga.

At the very time Ahmet was making Hegyra 266.
 these conquests, and when he had reason to Ch. ær. 879.
 expect the Caliph would be greatly enraged The Caliph
 against him, he, to his great surprize, re- implores his
 ceived a letter from that prince, wherein, assistance
 far from complaining of the injury done against Muaf-
 him by this revolt, and seizing his territo- sek.
 ries, he implored Ahmet's assistance against
 Muaffek. The Caliph repented he had
 given so much power to his brother ; not
 that he abused it, but because all persons
 made their applications to him. He had a
 more numerous and splendid court than his
 sovereign. Motamed's jealousy was excited
 on this account ; he was so mean-spirited
 as to throw himself into the arms of a man
 who was spoiling him of his dominions,
 and to induce him to take up arms against
 his

MOTAMED.

Hegyra 266.

Ch. ær. 879.

his own brother, who had effectually served him on the most trying occasions. It even appears, according to El Makin, that the Caliph not only wrote to Ahmet on that subject, but even held a personal conference with the rebel to engage him the more warmly to espouse his interest.

Ahmet returned such an answer as might have been expected from the most loyal subject. He told the Caliph he was extremely well pleased to meet with an opportunity of serving him ; and he promised to send him speedy assistance : it appears however, that he was in no great haste to perform his promise. He shewed indeed some little inclination to satisfy Motamed ; but it was only by making use of the same expedient, as had been so ineffectually employed in his own case.

Hegyra 267.

Ch. ær. 880.

Ahmet holds
an assembly of
the lords of
Syria and
Egypt on this
account.

He wrote to the governors of such provinces as submitted to his authority, to omit the name of Muaffek in the publick prayers, for he was named next to the Caliph, as being to succeed him in the throne. In a short time Ahmed gave notice to the nobles of Egypt and Syria to be present at a general council, which he appointed to be forthwith held, to deliberate on the means of restoring the Caliph's authority, by depriving Muaffek of the power he had enjoyed ever since the commencement of his brother's reign.

They all appeared at the time and place appointed ; and Ahmet having more fully explained

explained the matter, which was but slightly touched on in his circular letter, they agreed it was right to act against Muaffek, and they promised their assistance whensoever it should be required.

MOTAMED.
Hegyra 267.
Ch. 2r. 88o.

However, this step was strongly opposed by Obcar, Ahmet's chancellor, who represented that they had no right to decide the fate of Muaffek, until the Caliph himself had publicly annulled what he had so solemnly done in behalf of that prince. "My lord," said he to Ahmet, "you have laid before us the Caliph's letters, which contain an account of the choice he had made of his brother to be his colleague and successor in the empire. Be pleased now to shew us any letters from that prince, by which he revokes the former."

Ahmet, in a rage, answered, "It is enough that I tell thee the Caliph is not now able to make such a revocation; Muaffek treats him like a prisoner. But I see which party you favour, and I shall prevent your making any further declaration; and shall this moment cause you to be apprehended, and resume all the favours I have so liberally bestowed on you." This menace was executed on the spot; Ahmet dismissed his chancellor, put him in prison, and entirely stripped him of all his effects.

Though many of the council favoured the chancellor's opinion, yet they were so intimidated at the treatment he had met with

on

MOTAMED.
Hegyra 267.
Ch. x. 880.

on account of his opposition, that they concurred with Ahmet; and it was agreed, that Muaffek should be no longer acknowledged as colleague to Motamed in the Caliphate.

Hegyra 268.
Ch. x. 881.

It does not appear that these great preparations came to any thing; at least, historians do not say that Ahmet performed the promise he made to the Caliph.

Nor do we find, on the other hand, that Muaffek paid any great regard to his brother's menaces, or seemed to be daunted at the assistance which Ahmet agreed to give him. He took no other revenge on the latter, than by commanding curses to be denounced against him in the mosques at the time of publick prayers; however, he was resolved to take another kind of vengeance, so soon as he should have carried into execution a design he had been long revolving in his mind.

Muaffek destroys the Zinghians.

He resolved to march out against the Zinghians, in order to recover the honour he had lost in being defeated by their troops. He therefore assembled a numerous army, and putting himself at their head, (with Mothadi his son) he marched out to meet the enemy.

This expedition was more successful than the former. The Zinghians were defeated in the first action; but, as the victor had sustained by much the greatest loss of men, they were soon in a condition of attempting to take their revenge.

In

In the beginning of the next year a battle was fought in which the Zinghians were totally routed. A great number of their troops were killed, and the remainder were either dispersed or taken prisoners; even the prince who commanded them was obliged to betake himself to a precipitate flight: Muaffek so closely pursued him, that he overtook him in the province of Ahwaz, where he had taken shelter with such of his troops as had escaped from the battle. He made an attempt to defend himself; but his resistance only served to occasion the destruction of the remainder of his forces: he was at last made prisoner, and his head was soon cut off and sent to Bagdat. After the death of this chieftain, the remains of the Zinghians dispersed themselves into different provinces; and this party, which till that time had been so formidable, was totally eradicated.

So glorious an expedition had an amazing effect in the whole mahometan empire, and particularly at Bagdat, where all men joined in giving Muaffek due praise. Even the Caliph could not avoid shewing his gratitude for the great obligations he had to him; he publicly made his acknowledgments on that account, by promising him his friendship, and giving him the title of Nasser Lédinillah, that is to say, Protector of the mussulman religion; and he continued to govern under that title till his death.

Muaffek

MOTAMED.

Hegyra 270.

Ch. ar. 883.

Death of

Ahmet.

Muaffek was desirous of putting the last hand to his renown, by turning his arms against Ahmet, governor of Egypt; but he had scarce begun his march, when he received advice of his death. One would think that this event should not have prevented his departure; for if he had marched into Egypt with his forces, he might easily have put an end to the revolt, by preventing the son of Ahmet from heading the rebels; which event actually happened. But Muaffek seemed to have no more than a personal quarrel with Ahmet; for so soon as he heard of his death, he countermanded the orders he had issued for taking the field.

Ahmet's character.

El Makin relates many passages, which place the character of this rebel in a very advantageous light: however he agrees, that he was cruel and blood-thirsty; though at no other time but when he drew his sword against an enemy. On other occasions he was liberal, affectionate, full of compassion, and very charitable to the poor. It is asserted, that he distributed each month three thousand crowns, and gave one thousand crowns more to such as officiated in the mosques*. He did not confine his bounty to his province alone; he extended it even to the capital of the Caliph's dominions, whither he sent at one time two millions two

* Ahmet caused a magnificent mosque to be erected between Old and New Cairo, which is called to this day, the mosque of Ben Tolon.

hundred thousand gold crowns, part of MOTAMED.
 which was for the poor and infirm, and the Hegyra 270.
 residue was bestowed in considerable gifts to Ch. art. 883.
 the learned, and such as cultivated letters.

But this was a trifle if compared to the expence of his household; for he had seven thousand slaves, seven thousand horses, eight thousand mules, as many camels, and three hundred charging horses for battle; besides this, the daily expence of his table was three thousand crowns; and which is very surprising, notwithstanding these great expences, ten millions of gold were found in his coffers after his death. He was, indeed, possessed of a prodigious revenue; and it is asserted, that the government of Egypt alone, brought him in yearly three hundred millions of gold†.

Ahmet, who was possessed of so great a Rise of Ah-
 fortune, was by birth a Turk, and was in met.
 his youth a slave at Mamon's court. He afterwards enlisted in the Turkish militia, which was in the service of the Caliphs, and having distinguished himself for his bravery,

† The abbot Renaudot, in the history of his patriarchs of Alexandria, asserts, that El Makin, and Herbelot, who followed him, were both mistaken in making the revenue of Egypt amount to so large a sum. He assures us, from approved authors, that this province brought in about four millions three hundred thousand deniers of gold, and not more; which was far from being inconsiderable, more especially as Egypt had been many times ravaged by the Arabians, and as the governors placed there before the days of Ahmet, had enriched themselves by exhausting it. *Hist. Patriar. Alex.* p. 334.

MOTAMED. he soon attained a high command in that corps. At that time his worth was well known at court ; and as he had a great soul, an elevated mind, and was a man of a most polite and engaging behaviour, he was held in the greatest esteem by the whole mussulman empire ; and the governments of Egypt and Syria becoming vacant, the Caliph Motaz thought he could not do better than to confer them on so deserving a subject. The revolutions he caused in the sequel, plainly shewed that a more prudent choice might have been made. He left thirty-three male children, and was succeeded by his eldest son called Hamarowiah. El Makin relates, that when Ahmet approached his end, he raised his hands and eyes to heaven, and cried out, “ Lord have mercy on him who hath known no bounds to his power ; and shew him in these his last moments that thou wilt have compassion upon him.”

From the decease of this prince till the death of Muaffek, which happened ten years afterwards, nothing of moment passed relating to the reign of Motamed ; and this may be attributed to the distemper with which Muaffek was attacked at the very time he was on the point of marching out against Ahmet. He had already felt some few slight fits of the gout, but the malady now became habitual, and left him but short intervals of ease. Being deprived of his wonted activity, and unable to stir abroad, all he could

could now do, was to make use of the few moments in which he was free from his pains, in giving orders for the well governing of the state; for though the Caliph had shewn the utmost discontent and jealousy, on account of his brother's having assumed the sole management of publick affairs, he had not made the least step towards taking the reins of government into his own hands.

MOTAMED.
Hegyra 270.
Ch. ær. 883.

This prince was so wedded to his pleasures, that he had never taken the least pains to instruct himself in the duty of a sovereign: however, he was a man of wit, and had a taste for the belles lettres, for the arts, and particularly for musick, of which he was passionately fond; but he addicted himself to these kinds of study, like a private man who had no other employment; or when he had gone too great a length in his debauches, and not like a monarch who paid a due regard to his duty, and the business of the state, who ought no further to attempt the attaining such accomplishments, than as they may serve to amuse and unbend his mind after his more important occupations.

Parallel between Motamed and Muaffek.

Muaffek was of a very different disposition. He at least equalled his brother in wit, and was endowed with a penetration of mind, sublimity of sentiment, and above all, an extraordinary activity in the administration of publick affairs, to which Motamed was an utter stranger. This made him suffer

MOTAMED. with greater regret the pains of a distemper
 Hegyra 270. which forced him to lead a sedentary life.

Ch. ar. 883.

But as the eye of the sovereign, or his representative, is on some occasions more effectual than orders, so, at such times, his presence was indispensibly necessary; and as he could not sit on horseback, he contrived a kind of chair, or rather portable chamber, in which, placing himself in such a position as was most conducive to his ease, a slave continually rubbed his legs and feet with snow, which he found to be the only means of alleviating his pains. This chair was carried by a certain number of slaves, who were from time to time relieved by others, forty men attending for that purpose.

Abul Faragius, from whom this fact is taken, mentions at the same time a passage, which not only shews the great humanity of Muaffek, but also gives us a high idea of his character. That prince was far from treating his slaves with so much harshness and cruelty, as was usual to the orientals; (and which is far from uncommon, in respect to servants of another kind, amongst nations who pretend to be more polite) he thought his servants were men like himself, and that there was no difference between them but what arose from the caprice of fortune: he was sensible of the trouble he gave them; and sometimes said to them, "I am sure you must

must be worn out with fatigue: I pity you; MOTAMED.
 but I am so excruciated, that I would rather change conditions with you than remain as I am; for, spight of your fatigue, you enjoy perfect health.”

The great pains with which this prince was tormented, did not prevent him from continually using his utmost endeavours to promote the quiet, and advance the glory of the state, which he alone could have conducted under so indolent a monarch as the Caliph; and as he foresaw, that in case of his death the state would be so neglected as to occasion great disorders, he early accustomed his son to business, that he might assist him in his life-time, and on his death might be capable of taking in hand the helm of government.

Muaffek having thus passed several years, Hegyra 278.
 amidst the hurry of business and the torments Ch. ar. 891.
 of the gout, at last finished his course in the Death of Mu-
 278th year of the Hegyra, and the 891st of affek.
 the Christian æra. The death of this prince was universally lamented in the mussulman empire. His goodness, mildness, his capacity and bravery, had gained him the hearts of all the people. The grandees of the state, who knew him intimately, from the frequent opportunities they had of being about his person, regretted his loss the more; and in order to give the highest proof of regard to his memory, they intreated the Caliph to bestow on Mothaded his son, all

MOTAMED. the honours and prerogatives which the father had so gloriously enjoyed during his lifetime. To this request Motamed willingly consented; but he had soon cause to repent of his compliance.

Mothaded his son obliges the Caliph to declare him his successor.

So soon as the unlimited power of Muaffek was transferred to Mothaded his son, that prince resolved to take advantage of the Caliph's weakness, and to open to himself a way to the throne; but as he could not succeed in his design, without first removing Giaffer the son of Motamed, whom the Caliph had some years before appointed to be his successor, he held a conference on that subject with the principal courtiers, who chusing rather to see him possessed of the diadem, than the Caliph's son, whom they disliked equally with the father, they resolved to go in a body to the Caliph, to compel him to annul the appointment of his son, and to nominate Mothaded in his stead.

This affair having been communicated to Motamed, he was greatly amazed at their presumption, in making him an offer equally unkind and disadvantageous both to him and his son; he gave a very cold reception to those that made the proposal: however, as he found, that this design was not the work of an inconsiderable party, but that his whole court, and the principal men of the state, were attached to Mothaded, and desirous of the exclusion of Giaffer, he thought it absolutely necessary to comply with their request,

request, as the only means of preventing those disturbances which would inevitably have resulted from his refusal. MOTAMED.

This extraordinary event happened in the beginning of the 279th year of the Hegyra. Hegyra 279.
Ch. ær. 892. There was a general meeting of the nobility and chief officers of the state, in which the Caliph deprived his own son of the right he had to succeed him in the throne, and transferred it to Mothaded.

The universal applause which was shewn on the taking this step, encreased the Caliph's grief; he was forthwith seized with a fit of melancholy, which soon brought him to the grave. He died of a quinsy, in the fiftieth year of his age, and the twenty-third year of his reign. His corps was carried from Bagdat to Samarath, where it was buried. Motamed's
death.

According to El Makin, this prince had a handsome countenance, but his complexion was somewhat brown; his head was large, and his face was pitted with the small-pox; his shape was faultless, and his beard long, which, as well as his hair, was beginning to grow grey.

As to his character, it may be well known from what has been said of him in the account of his reign. This prince loved nought but pleasure, and willingly resigned to others the management of the state. Muaffek took advantage of his indolence, and gained so great power as to govern the empire at his

MOTAMED. pleasure. He was absolute master of the finances; insomuch that he sometimes refused to give the Caliph such sums as he demanded, on pretence he made an improper use of money, when he had it in his power: in short, Motamed lavished his income away in trifling amusements, which were held in the highest contempt by such a man as Muaffek.

Hogya 279.
Ch. xi. 892.

El Makin mentions some verses which the Caliph made one day, when his brother had denied him something he asked for. The verses purported as follows: "Is it not amazing, that a man like me should be refused such a trifle? My name surrounds the whole world, and my hands are empty."

Amongst the learned men who dwelt at Bagdat, since the time literature had been in request there, were two, who distinguished themselves in the reign of Motamed. The first, who was called Alcendi, was the son of Isaac, governor of Cufah in the reigns of Mahadi and Haroun. He was a perfect master of medicine, logick, astronomy, philosophy, geometry, arithmetick, and musick: they gave him the surname of The Philosopher, by way of excellence.

The second was a Christian, named Kosta ebn Luca: he travelled over Greece, and collected a great number of excellent works, which he translated into Arabick. An Armenian lord, called Senarib, engaged him in his service, and there he passed the rest of his

his days. They erected a tomb of marble MOTHADED.
 in memory of him, on which they caused Hegyr 279.
 the figure of a lyre to be engraved : an hon- Ch. æt. 892.
 our which was bestowed only on kings
 and legislators.

M O T H A D E D - B I L L A H.

The THIRTY-FIFTH CALIPH.

MOthaded ebn Muaffek was pro-
 claimed Caliph the next day after
 the death of his uncle Motamed ; and, on
 his accession to the crown, he shewed he
 was worthy to wear it. Being brought up
 by a father, who, without ascending the
 throne, had absolutely governed the state ;
 under him he learned the art of reign-
 ing, of which he gave signal proofs during
 the whole course of his Caliphate.

He was sure of the love of the people,
 from their gratitude for his father's services ;
 and he encreased it still more by the favours
 he bestowed on them during the whole
 course of his reign, and even from the very
 first steps he took towards the throne. As
 he was entrusted with the management of
 the government immediately after his father's
 death, he soon discovered that the people
 were over-burthened by the taxes of the pre-
 ceding year, so that only a small part thereof
 could be collected ; he therefore generously

MOTHADED. remitted the arrears, and prudently took such measures, that, for the future, the taxes should be proportionable to the abilities of his subjects.

Mothaded
favours the
Alians.

This prince was desirous, in the beginning of his reign, to strike a bold stroke in favour of the Alians; but he was dissuaded from it by the reasons urged to the contrary by his chief minister. However, he bestowed on that family all the favours he possibly could, without raising up enemies.

It is said that the inclination which Mothaded entertained for that house, was owing to a dream he had at the time he led a private life during the reign of his uncle. He saw a man, who stretching his hand over the Tigris, drained that river dry, and afterwards brought back the waters to their bed, by withdrawing his hand. The same man asked him if he knew him, and Mothaded answered in the negative: "I am Ali," replied he, "thou seest how great is my power; when, therefore thou shalt ascend the throne, take heed thou dost good to the children of my race." The prince gave his promise; and this was the foundation for his siding with the Alians.

The Caliph is
dissuaded from
denouncing
curse against
Moawiyah.

In consequence of this promise he also resolved to cause curses to be publicly denounced against Moawiyah the first Caliph of the Ommiyans, to revenge the memory of Ali, against whom that prince had also caused maledictions to be pronounced at the time

time of publick prayers. Mothaded held a MOTHADED.
Hegyra 279.
Ch. ar. 892. long conference on this subject with Obeidallah ebn Soliman his grand vizir, who gave him very wholsome advice on the matter: he remonstrated to him, that the family of the Ommiyans was greatly encreased since the time the fatal blow was given in order to destroy it; that by cursing Moawiyah he would anger all the relations of that prince, and in a word all that belonged to the house of Ommiyah; that it was a great happiness those princes remained quiet, and therefore it would be imprudent to stir up an old quarrel, which might induce them to consider their strength and power, and to endeavour to make use of it, to the great disturbance and detriment of the state. He strongly insisted on the difference between the conduct of the Alians and Ommiyans, and entreated the Caliph to consider that the latter had raised no great commotions with a view to reinstate themselves; whereas the Alians had ever been turbulent and restless, and scarce a reign had passed but some one of that family had made attempts to regain the throne; that he ought carefully to avoid giving them any advantage, as they were too much inclined to make an ill use of it; and in short, that he might be assured the Alians and Ommiyans equally hated the Abassians; and that for the future no distinction ought to be made between them.

The

MOTHADED.

Hegyra 279.

Ch. ær. 892.

The Caliph was convinced by these reasons of his vizir; that is to say, he did not put his design against the Ommiyans in execution; however, he thought himself bound to shew some favour to the Alians, in consequence of his promise made in the before-mentioned dream; for the orientals paid a great regard to dreams. There were men amongst them whose sole business it was to interpret their sleeping thoughts; and they did not want business, for the heat of the climate made them subject to dreams and visions. It will appear that the Caliph was more subject to such delusions than any other person; and, notwithstanding his eminent qualifications, it is highly probable he was a little enthusiastick.

Hegyra 280.

Ch. ær. 893.

Mothaded gives a favourable reception to the ambassadors from the Sultan of Egypt.

Some months after Mothaded's accession, ambassadors arrived at his court from Hamarowiah, son of the famous Ahmet ebn Tholon, and his successor in the governments of Egypt and Syria. He followed his father's example, set up as sovereign in those governments, and even assumed the title of Sultan; but as he had condescended to demand an investiture of the Caliph, he was no longer considered as a rebel, but as a sovereign, whom they were unwillingly forced to tolerate. That prince therefore boldly sent an embassy to Mothaded, and offered his daughter, called Ketrolnada, in marriage to the Caliph's eldest son.

The ambassadors met with a favourable reception from Mothaded, who having taken a liking

liking to Ketrolnada, from the description that MOTHADED.
 was given him of her beauty, answered, that Hegyra 280.
 he partly consented to the Sultan's proposal; Ch. xiv. 893.
 that he would receive the princess with great
 pleasure at his court, but not as a wife for his
 son, since he chose rather to take her for
 himself. Hamarowiah, delighted with this
 answer, sent and returned the Caliph thanks;
 and from that moment a perfect under-
 standing subsisted between the two princes.
 Ketrolnada being then too young to be mar-
 ried, did not set out for Bagdat till about
 two years after the contract was signed with
 the Caliph.

In that interval Mothaded was forced to He puts an
 take up arms to stop the incursions of a large end to a revolt
 body of Arabians and Curdes, who having of the Ara-
 joined their forces, entered Mesopotamia, bians and
 and plundered all the country about Mossul. Curdes.
 The news of this irruption having been
 brought to Bagdat, the Caliph departed at
 the head of his troops, and marched with
 the utmost expedition towards Mossul, where
 he approached the rebels. By means of
 marches and counter-marches, they for some
 time avoided coming to blows with that
 prince, and made some feints in order to
 prevent it; but Mothaded observed them so
 narrowly, and followed them so closely, that
 at last he came up with them near the river
 Zaban, where they were driven to the ne-
 cessity of conquering or dying. In this
 place a bloody action ensued, which termi-
 nated

MOTHADED. nated greatly in the Caliph's favour. The
Hegyra 281. rebels were either cut in pieces or drowned
Ch. xxi. 894. in the river, and the few that escaped were
 dispersed on all sides.

He seizes
 Mardin and
 razes it.

After this expedition, Mothaded being displeased with a lord named Hamadam, who seemed to be plotting some treason, and for the execution of which he had caused to be built on his lands a strong citadel called Mardin, came in person to attack the place. On the Caliph's approach Hamadam quitted the citadel, and left his son to defend it. The siege was therefore begun, and many attacks made on the place, which was defended with great bravery. These assaults not succeeding, and the Caliph being desirous to spare his troops, approached the fort in person, and demanded a parley with the son of Hamadam: the affair was concluded at the first conference. Mothaded having promised that young officer safety of life for himself and his garrison, if he would surrender the place, the terms were accepted. The commandant marched out with his troops, and the Caliph forthwith issued orders, that all the furniture and other effects, ammunition, warlike machines, and provisions, should be carried away; and he then caused the citadel to be razed. The destruction of this fort put an end as well to the quarrel as to the Caliph's displeasure; for soon after his return to Bagdat, Hamadam appeared at court, and asking pardon
 for

for his fault, Mothaded gave him a gracious reception ; and that officer and his son took the oath of allegiance to him.

MOTHADED.
Hegyra 282.
Ch. ær. 895.

In a few months after this event, the princess whom the Caliph was to marry, made her entrance into Bagdat with great pomp and splendour. On this occasion, Hamarowiah displayed his immense riches : his daughter was attended by a numerous train of the greatest lords in Syria and Egypt, who carried presents of inestimable value, which were to be given to the Caliph in his name.

Diversions on
account of the
marriage of
Mothaded
with Ketrol-
nada.

Mothaded, on his part, received the princess with the utmost magnificence. From the time of her arrival till the marriage, and even long afterwards, there were daily public diversions and sumptuous entertainments, which rendered Bagdat a most delightful abode, where all men were partakers of joy and pleasure ; for these entertainments were not confined to the court alone ; the people had their diversions, and there were exhibited, as well in the streets as on the Tygris, spectacles of various kinds, which were concluded by entertainments given to the inhabitants in different parts of the city.

But whilst they were in the midst of their pleasures, news arrived which damped the joy of the whole court, on account of the grief it occasioned to the Caliph and his new bride ; Hamarowiah was no more. They were

Hamarowiah
is assassinated.

MOTHADED. were informed he was assassinated at Damascus in the night-time, by one of his servants*. Mothaded, who had entertained a cordial friendship for that prince, was greatly moved at so fatal an event; and his grief was augmented by the lamentations uttered by the affectionate Ketrolnada, when she was informed of her father's death.

His son procures himself to be proclaimed Sultan.

In a short time they received from that place news almost equally disagreeable. The officers and chief men of Damascus were divided in opinion touching the person to succeed Hamarowiah: some of them named Geisch, the eldest son of that prince, who forthwith possessed himself of the throne, firmly bent to maintain the possession he had taken. Others of the nobility, who were in the interest of Hamarowiah's brother, and would have him for their sovereign, went armed to the palace to attack the new Sultan, and force him to condescend to their will; but that prince having caused his un-

* The debaucheries of this prince were the cause of his destruction. Having one day caused a young man to be beaten to death, because he would not comply with his infamous desires, his own servants were so shocked at his behaviour, that they resolved to assassinate him in his sleep; but, in order to execute their design, they were forced to wait till he should leave Egypt, for the thing would not have been practicable in that country. This prince had about him a tame lioness, who lay at his feet whilst he slept, and would not suffer any person to approach her master till he was awake. When he travelled, the lioness remained in Egypt; and Hamarowiah going to pass some time at Damascus, his servants made use of that opportunity, and one night cut off his head. Renaudot's Hist. Patriar. Alex. p. 334.

cle's head to be cut off, and thrown out of MoTHADED.
the window amidst the mutineers, who were HEGYRA 282.
then fighting with his guards, they were so CH. X. 895.
struck at the sight that they instantly re-
tired; however, they did not quit their re-
solution of deposing the Sultan.

But they could not carry it into execution HEGYRA 283.
till the following year. They returned with CH. X. 896.
an armed force, attacked that prince, killed He is killed,
him, together with his mother, plundered and Haroun
the palace, and afterwards retired to a place proclaimed in
of safety. Haroun, the second son of Ha- his place.
marowiah, was in a short time proclaimed
sultan. These revolutions happened in Sy-
ria within the space of a few months, and
all the transactions passed in the city of Da-
mascus, which Hamarowiah had chosen to
be the capital of his dominions.

So soon as the confusion occasioned by the Haroun re-
perpetration of these horrid deeds (which ceives the in-
had happened upon the back of one another) vestiture in
was a little over; Mothaded resolved to take consideration
some measures to fix the dependence of the of a tribute.
Sultan of Egypt in relation to the Caliphs,
by other means than a bare investiture; in-
somuch that when Haroun wrote to him to
demand it, that prince refused to comply till
he had agreed to pay the Caliph an annual
duty of a million of gold, over and besides
five hundred thousand crowns. The Sultan
being desirous of procuring Mothaded to be
his friend and protector, readily complied
with what was required of him; and by
these

MOTHADED. these means he, in a few years, gained two other considerable governments, which the Caliph added to those he was already possessed of, on payment of an annual sum of four hundred thousand crowns.

The Caliph's
uneasiness
about a vision
he had.

In this year Mothaded was greatly tormented with dreams and visions; the following is one (amongst others) of a pretty singular kind: being retired one day to his apartment to sleep, all the doors flew open, and a phantom appeared before him: this vision was repeated several times, but the phantom always appeared in a different form; at one time like a dervise, at another like a merchant, and again under the likeness of a soldier. The colour and complexion were also changed each time: for the figure was sometimes pale, sometimes florid, and at other times shining with lustre, and again of a dark-brown hue; and its attitudes and paces were also diversified: in short, these repeated apparitions made a great noise in Bagdat, and found full employment for the astrologers, and interpreters of dreams, who were not able to give any satisfactory solution of the matter. Some said that the phantom was one of the genii, or a hobgoblin, called Ginne by the Arabians: others, that it was a devil sent to torment that prince; and others, that it was an angel sent to warn him to repent of his faults. Some persons of sense imagined it to be no more than artifice, and carried on in all proba-

probability by some officer of the court, who MOTHADED. Hegyra 283. Ch. ar. 896. had a design in view, the execution of which might be forwarded by intimidating the Caliph: they hinted their suspicions to him; and on this occasion he treated some of his household very roughly, in hopes of discovering the imposition. But, after all, these visions might well take their rise in an overheated imagination, which might bring before the sight objects, on which it was employed with too great attention.

Judicial astrology, to which the Arabians Hegyra 284. Ch. ar. 897. applied themselves with their accustomed eagerness, greatly contributed to keep up, and even give a rise to dreams and visions amongst people of so warm a fancy, who being struck by the predictions of their astrologers, imagined they really saw all they hoped, or all they feared. When a dream had made an impression upon them, they had immediate recourse to those whose business it was to interpret them; and as their interpretations sometimes by chance proved true, they gained the greatest esteem and credit; and the people endeavoured to impose on themselves, by not considering, that for the most part they were not only mistaken in their predictions, but that the very contrary happened to what they had foretold. Though the princes were better instructed than the people, yet they also gave into this ridiculous superstition; and there was not a sovereign in the East, who had not at his

Great inclination of the orientals to astrology.

MOTHADED.

Hegyra 284.

Ch. ær. 897.

Falsity of its
predictions.

court an astrologer, and interpreter of dreams, who were, if I may be allowed the expression, officers of state.

This very year produced an instance of the falsity of the predictions of judicial astrology. All the eminent men in that science had unanimously foretold, that in the 284th year of the Hegyra, such torrents of rain would fall, that the surface of greater Asia, through the whole extent of the mahometan empire, would be covered with water; and that this would be shortly followed by the overflowing of all the rivers.

Instead of this kind of deluge, there happened so terrible a drought over almost all Asia, that the springs failed, and trees and plants withered and died on the ground; insomuch that publick prayers and fasts were ordered to obtain rain: but notwithstanding this event, so diametrically opposite to what had been foretold with the greatest confidence, astrology lost very little of its credit, and was soon in as great request as it had formerly been.

Hegyra 285.

Ch. ær. 898.

Rise of the
sect of the
Karmathians.

The following year they were forced to take the field, to stop the progress of a sect of enthusiasts, who had alarmed all Arabia: they were called Karmathians, from the name of the founder of their religion and doctrine. This man at first contented himself with propagating his tenets; but they that succeeded him, finding their disciples very numerous, prevailed on them to
take

take up arms, and endeavoured to make conquests. Before I give an account of their exploits, it may not be improper to describe the person and doctrine of the founder of this sect.

MOTHADED,
Hegyra 285.
Ch. xx. 898.

Karmath, for so the impostor was called, was born in a village near Cufah, called Hamadan Karmaz; whence he took his name; others say he was so named, because he was little and deformed, according to the signification of the Arabian word Karmath. He published a doctrine tending to the overthrow of Mussulmanism; and as the new preacher made an affected shew of great austerity of life, he gained a great number of disciples, and made an amazing progress in Arabia.

But notwithstanding his pretended austerity, his doctrine was far from being so strict as that of Mahomet; except only in regard to prayer, which he ordained to be made fifty times a-day, whereas the prophet commanded only five prayers a-day: the rest of his tenets may be brought into a narrow compass; for he allegorized all the precepts of the mussulman law. According to his doctrine, even prayer was but a symbol of the obedience which they owed to the Imam or chief of the sect. Fasting was a symbol of the secrecy that ought to be observed, in respect to such as were not of the sect: and fidelity to their chief was typified by the precept against fornication and adultery.

MOTWADED.

Hegyra 285.

Ch. 22. 898.

Besides, he permitted his disciples to eat all that was prohibited by the mussulman law, and thereby freed them from many very troublesome things ; for example, from frequent ablutions, which he suppressed, and other legal ceremonies of that kind : in a word, instead of requiring the tenth part of all goods for the use of the poor, he demanded only the fifth, which he directed should be applied to the maintenance of the Imam. This was the title he assumed, and which he ordered his followers to bestow on such as should succeed him in the sovereign power, as well spiritual as temporal.

This sect made its first appearance about the 275th year of the Hegyra ; but for a time it passed almost unnoticed. Karmath preached only in villages, and other places in the neighbourhood of great cities, and deferred making a more publick appearance, till he had gained a sufficient number of disciples. As coadjutors to his mission, he was provided of twelve men, whom he had instructed, and who likewise dispersed themselves in the little towns and other bye-places.

The doctrine of Karmath was forthwith embraced with great zeal by the slaves, and all such as were forced to labour. They took in a literal sense what he told them of the necessity of praying fifty times a-day ; and as this was much more easy than their daily task, they left their work, under pretext of going to prayers. The masters
were

were a long time before they could discover whence the negligence of their slaves proceeded; but at last a great lord in the country, having observed that his lands were not cultivated, sharply reprimanded the overseer of his labourers: and he having alledged in his justification, that for some time they had quitted their work against his will, on pretence of saying their prayers, the lord asked what could be the cause of so ill-timed a devotion; and having been informed that a new apostle named Karmath, had principally occasioned this disorder, he sent his servants to apprehend him; and having confined him in a room in his castle, he put the key under his pillow, well pleased that he had got into his power a man, whose doctrine was calculated to introduce idleness, under colour of piety. He declared to several of his friends, who were that day at his house, that he would himself inflict a due punishment on the new apostle, and that on the next day he would cause his head to be cut off.

The daughter of this nobleman took compassion on Karmath; she artfully stole the key of the room in which he was confined, and having released the prisoner, she put it again in the place whence she took it, unperceived of her father. The next morning this lord going to cause the new doctor to be executed, he was greatly amazed to

MOTHADED.
Hegyra 285.
Ch. ar. 298.

MOTHADED. find no person in the room of which he himself had kept the key.
Hegyra 285.
Ch. ar. 898.

The escape of this impostor made a great noise, and by means of his artful management, contributed greatly to the success of his pretended mission: however, he dared no longer to remain in a place where he had run so great a risque; he therefore departed, and went to remote parts with his disciples, where he boasted that his enemies had endeavoured to apprehend him, but that God had been pleased, on this occasion, to give him a manifest proof of his protection, by miraculously freeing him from their hands.

Such was the account he gave of that event to his disciples; he even assured them, that for the future no person would dare to make the least attempt upon him: inso-much, that this adventure was not only a matter for exulting, but also served considerably to augment the number of his followers. We are not told what kind of end this impostor came to; but it is certain, that after his death the sect was headed by enterprising men, who finding their party very numerous, instructed their disciples in military discipline, began to plunder and lay waste, and even to make conquests.

Hegyra 286. Thus the Karmathians continued their
Ch. ar. 899. inroads over great part of Arabia, and at last came and exercised their ravages even in Arabian Irak, being at that time under command

mand of a leader, equally cruel and brave, MOTHADED.
 who gave quarter to no Mussulman. This Hegyra 286.
 general was called Abu Saïd Habah; he had Ch. æt. 899.
 already attained so great a degree of power,
 that he assumed the title of prince of the
 Karmathians. Being as able a man as their
 founder, but a much greater warrior, he
 had accustomed his followers to labour, fa-
 tigue, sobriety, and obedience, which he
 made a proper use of, in order to gain pos-
 session of some territories wherein he pro-
 posed to establish himself, after the manner
 of many other rebels, who by dint of care
 and pains, had procured themselves to be
 acknowledged as sovereigns.

Mothaded having been informed of the The Caliph
 terror and devastations caused by these en- sends forces
 thusiasts in his dominions, sent out against against the
 them a body of troops, under the command Karmathians.
 of Abbas ben Amrou, one of his chief offi-
 cers. This campaign proved unsuccessful
 to the Mussulmen. In vain did Abbas put
 in practice every military artifice to surprise
 the Karmathians: he had to do with an ex-
 periented general, and with troops amongst
 whom the strictest discipline had been intro-
 duced, insomuch that nothing was left but
 to come to a regular engagement.

And in a short time a pitched battle was They are de-
 fought, in which the Mussulmen and Kar- feated, and the
 mathians vied with each other, in giving general is
 signal proofs of bravery and intrepidity. taken prisoner.
 Abbas, who at first made not the least doubt

MOTHADED. of obtaining a victory, was amazed at the obstinate resistance of the Karmathians ; but he was much more so, when he saw his troops give ground upon their attacks : he did all that a great general could do to re-animate his soldiers ; but as he greatly exposed himself, in order to set an example to his men, the enemy made a violent push, broke his main body, and cut in pieces all they met. The general was taken prisoner, with eight or nine hundred men, as well officers as soldiers ; the rest of his army was put to the rout, and pursued to a great distance.

So soon as Abu Saïd was master of the mussulman general, he commanded him to be carried, together with the rest of the prisoners, to a neighbouring place. As Abbas well knew the cruel disposition of the conqueror, he was seized with fear the moment he fell into his hands, and found himself so closely confined. He thought such a kind of treatment was a sinister presage of what would happen to him in the sequel ; and he each moment expected to fall a sacrifice to the cruelty of the Karmathians, when he was informed that Abu Saïd intended to pay him a visit, and was desirous of having a private conference with him.

The general came to the prison, and soon freed Abbas from his fears : for he immediately offered him his life and liberty, on condition,

condition, however, that he should swear to perform what he was about to enjoin him.

MOTHADED.

Hegyra 286.

Ch. ar. 899.

Abbas having taken the oath, the Karmathian spoke to him in these terms: "I require thee to inform the Caliph of what I shall say to thee. I am an inhabitant of the Desert, and accustomed to live on a small matter. I have not taken from thy master any of his forts or cities. The troops he sent out against me have been defeated, because my foldiers are used to labour, and to live hard; his, on the contrary, require all the comforts and conveniencies of life; when they make war in this barren country, where they want all things, they disband, and then I give no quarter to such as fall into my hands. Thou may'st therefore represent to the Caliph, that a war carried on against me will always prove destructive and useless to him; and that, if he is wise, he will leave me unmolested."

Conference
between Ab-
bas, and Abu
Saïd.

Abbas having promised to give a faithful account to the Caliph of all that had been told him, Abu Saïd set him at liberty. Abbas performed his promise; and, in consequence of the report he made, Mothaded, by the advice of his ministers, resolved to make no further attempt on the Karmathians, whilst they should remain on the ground they had chosen, and in which it was indeed difficult to gain any great advantage over them.

Hegyra 287.

Ch. ar. 900.

For a long time they watched their motions, without taking any other measures to sub-

Hegyra 288.

Ch. ar. 901.

due

MOTHADED. due a party which yet was daily acquiring additional strength. During this interval the
Hegyra 288. whole province of Aderbijan was afflicted
Ch. 2r. 901. by the plague, which made a terrible havock. So many died there of that distemper, that the living did not suffice to bury the dead. Their bodies for the most part lay above ground, in the houses and fields, and many even on the road-side, which made the contagion to rage with continual fury. It was computed that in the capital of that province alone, the plague carried off more than fifteen thousand persons.

The Greeks
make an ir-
ruption.

During this period of time, the frontiers were afflicted by another scourge. The Greeks made an irruption into the mahometan provinces. They took and plundered the city of Kaïsume, and carried away more than twelve thousand of the inhabitants into slavery. The Grecians did not give them time to march out against them, in order to punish them for the insult; for they just appeared, and marched back again with the utmost expedition.

Hegyra 289.
Ch. 2r. 902.

The Karma-
thians conti-
nue to ravage.

The Karmathians having strengthened themselves during the time they remained undisturbed, advanced into the mussulman dominions, and began their ravages anew. In order to be able to plunder a greater extent of country, they divided their forces into several bodies, which carried terror and confusion on all sides; in this manner they penetrated almost to the city of Cufah, and
 seemed

seemed to threaten a nearer approach. The MOTHADED. Caliph immediately issued orders for repair- Hegyra 289. ing the fortifications of Basorah, and aug- Ch. 2r. 902. mented the garrison of that city; and he at the same time caused a body of troops to march towards the neighbourhood of Cufah. He gave the command of these forces to an able officer, and recommended it to him to take proper advantage of the division which Abu Saïd had made of his troops, that he might with the more ease defeat him.

This enterprize was more successful than They are de- the last which was undertaken against the feated, and rebels. Mothaded's general having maturely Abu Saïd is weighed their motions, found an opportu- made priso- nity of separately engaging one of the bodies, which was ravaging the country near Cufah. And he attacked it so furiously that the enemy could not stand their ground: this detachment was cut in pices, and the commander of it made prisoner. It was Abu Saïd himself, that formidable chief, who had so long and boldly kept the field.

He was immediately sent to Bagdat under Abu Saïd is a strong guard, and brought before the Ca- brought be- liph. Though Abu Saïd was a prisoner, and in fore the a condition to expect nothing but death, yet he entered the palace, and appeared before the prince with as much boldness and unconcern as if he had been at the head of his own army. Mothaded was surprised at his appearance, but he was much more so at the language used by that rebel, in the conference

MOTHADED. ference held between them. He was not only bold, but insolent, and examining the rise of the Dynasty of the Abassians, he made it appear that this family had unjustly possessed themselves of the Caliphate, by shewing that the head of it, Abu'l Abbas, (who lived in the days of Abu Beker and Omar) was excluded from the succession to the throne, and consequently, he said, all his descendants were comprized in the exclusion: whence he inferred, that Mothaded had no right to call him to an account for his conduct: and he with the same boldness said to him in express terms; "Why do you trouble yourself about our opinions or actions? mind only what relates to yourself."

He is put to death.

The death of Mothaded.

The Caliph, enraged at the insolence of this rebel, put an end to the conference, and sentenced him to death. He was condemned to have his hands and feet cut off, and to be afterwards hanged on the common gibbet. This execution was so far from intimidating the Karmathians, that it seemed to render them more obstinate in their revolt: they chose for their leader an officer named Zacarwiah, a brave and intrepid man, who soon found employment for the Mussulmen, but not till the reign of the next Caliph; for Mothaded died the same year, having lived forty-nine years, of which he had reigned nine. He left three children, who successively possessed the throne. The first was called Moktaphi, the second Moktader, and the third Caher. This

This Caliph was regretted by the whole musulman empire. He had gained the affections of his subjects, on account of his goodness, his understanding, and his great capacity in the conduct of publick affairs. He was as sparing as possible of the blood of his people, having never made war but when he could by no means avoid it. His officers feared him, for he was naturally hasty, and not easily pleased, but his passion lasted not long, and he soon recovered his usual moderation.

MOTHADED.
Hegyra 289.
Ch. 2r. 902.

By the following instance it will appear, that though this Caliph was easily moved to wrath, yet he may be proposed as an example of moderation, which few princes would be capable of. Abdallah ebn Soliman, who was an eye witness, relates the fact in these terms: "A slave being one day near that prince, inadvertently struck him a great blow with the stick whereto the fringe was fastened, which they made use of to drive away the flies that incommoded him. I saw him start, and was not a little moved my self, says Abdallah, for I foresaw the punishment the poor wretch must suffer for his aukward carelessness; but I was much amazed when I heard the Caliph say, with great coolness, surely the fellow is asleep! Upon this I fell at the prince's feet, and cried out: O commander of the faithful, had I not seen, had I not heard it, I should never have believed that a monarch could have carried his moderation so far. Was it
fit

His character.

MOTHADED. fit I should have acted otherwise? answered the Caliph, I do not believe he did it designedly, and therefore it is excusable; for voluntary faults alone merit punishment."

Hegyra 289.
Ch. xi. 902.

This prince was highly blamed for the great regard he shewed to the Alians: indeed he did them all the service in his power; and when he was gently reprov'd on that account, he was never at a loss for a dream to authorize his conduct. The following instance of his behaviour in that respect, is worthy being related: Mahomet ben Zaid, prince of Mazanderan, was accustomed to send yearly to Mecca the sum of thirty thousand gold crowns, to be distributed amongst such of the house of Ali as were in want. It fell out one year, that this prince having sent that sum to a merchant in Bagdat, to be remitted to the usual place, the officer of justice seized the money: the merchant having preferred his complaint to the Caliph, he issued out an order, that the money should be forthwith restored. The enemies of the Alians, with a view to support the seizure, waited on the Caliph, and endeavoured to get the order revoked; but Mothaded told them he had lately had a dream, in which Ali, appearing to him, predicted, that his three sons should reign after him; and that he had recommended it to him, out of gratitude for the prediction, to be favourable to his race, and by his example to incite his children to grant them their protection. For this

this good information, he thought he could do no less than favour the Alians, more especially upon an occasion where charity alone would forbid the depriving them of the means of subsistence. With this answer therefore he dismissed them, and sent the money to Mecca.

MOTHADED.
Hegyta 289.
Ch. 2r. 902.

El Makin tells us, that Mothaded being in want of a large sum of money, sent for one of the Magi, who was reputed to be the richest merchant in Bagdat. That prince informed him that his treasury would not furnish him with the money necessary for an enterprize he was about to take in hand, and therefore he had recourse to him to supply the deficiency. "If it is in my power, my lord, to advance the sum you want, I shall do it with the greatest readiness," answered the merchant, "for all I have is at your service." "But you do not mention a word touching security," replied the Caliph, "and I cannot conceive how you propose to recover your money." "My lord," said the merchant, "you are commander of the faithful; God has thought fit to trust in your hands the lives and fortunes of his servants; and you manage them well, for you are a lover of justice; why then should I hesitate to trust you with my money?" The Caliph was so well pleased with so open and generous a behaviour, that he thanked the merchant, and said to him, "Well! go thy ways, I will not borrow any thing of thee;

MOTABED. thee ; but if thou wantest money, come to me, and I will always supply thee out of my coffers."

Hagya 289.
Ch. xx. 902.

Another author relates an extraordinary adventure, in which a Mussulman named Scheik Kaiat was concerned, and whereby he gained the friendship and esteem of the Caliph, as well as a high character and great respect in Bagdat.

This Mussulman, who was a person of honour and probity, one day passing the streets of Bagdat, heard a woman cry out for help. Scheik having forthwith entered the house, found there a Turk, who was attempting to force a woman: he sharply reprimanded the man, who he returned ill language, and even threatened worse treatment. Scheik not thinking himself able to punish the Turk for his insolence, ascended the minaret of a neighbouring mosque, and called the people to prayers. Though it was not the appointed hour, yet many persons flocked thither ; and Scheik having informed them of the fact, they forthwith went and apprehended the Turk, who was punished on the same day.

The Caliph having been informed of this event, was highly pleased with it. At his desire Scheik was brought before him ; and he ordered that Mussulman always to use the same means to put a stop to any future disorder, till he could apply a remedy, by inflicting due punishment on the offenders.

By

By this means Scheik became so respectable MOTHADED.
in Bagdat, that not a man dared in his pre- Hegyra 289.
sence to infringe the rules of decency and Ch. 2r. 902.
good order.

An author named Mohammed ben Abdaluech, says on this head, That a tradesman of Bagdat lent a considerable sum of money to a lord of the court, who, after having used it a long time, at last refused to pay it. The tradesman commenced a lawsuit against him for the debt; the courtier defended it for the sake of delay, and the creditor having been at a great expence to prosecute his suit, without success, resolved to sit down with the loss, and more especially as his affairs were thereby so greatly prejudiced, that he found it necessary to quit Bagdat. One of his friends, to whom he communicated his grievance, advised him to complain to Scheik: the tradesman followed his advice, and success soon attended this step. Scheik went to the courtier, and talked to him so roundly, that for fear of being exposed, he soon paid the tradesman his full demand.

The reign of Mothaded was distinguished Learned men
by the great number of learned men that that were famous during
flourished under his Caliphate. Thabet ebn the reign of
Korra, and Ahmet ebn Mohammed, were Mothaded.
famous amongst others, on account of their extensive knowledge.

The former published several works upon
logick, metaphysics, and medicine. He
VOL. III. X wrote

MOTHADED. wrote in Syriac the history of the ancient Sabæans, and gave a very useful and particular account of their customs, the precepts of their religion, and their civil laws. The latter composed several works on the sciences, to which the ancient Arabians applied themselves. The Caliph was thoroughly acquainted with their great discernment and knowledge, and profited by their advice in many affairs of the utmost importance; and as they were very good companions, he not only conversed with them with great freedom and unreserve, but readily admitted them to all his parties of pleasure.

Rise of the
Samanites.

During the Caliphate of this prince, the Dynasty of the Samanites arose, and established itself on the ruins of the Dynasty of the Soffarites. Motamed, who preceded Mothaded, had lived upon good terms with Amrou ebn Leith, who was, as we have said, the second prince of the Dynasty of the Soffarites. He had even done important service to the Caliph, in gaining a victory for him over Mohammed, the son of Zeid, who had been proclaimed Caliph in Chorasan. Amrou defeated him in a battle, and sent him bound to Bagdat.

Out of gratitude for this piece of service, Motamed had always shewn a great regard and esteem for Amrou, and had even declared himself his friend on many occasions: but Mothaded perceiving, that the power of this prince augmented daily, resolved to
force

force from out of his hands, all such parts of his dominions, as his brother and he had usurped from the Caliphs.

MOTHADED.
Hegyra 289.
Ch. 21. 902.

Mothaded brought over to his side Ishmael, the son of Ahmet, and great grandson of Saman*, whence he and his posterity took the name of Samanites. By force of intreaties, and by the assistance of money, Mothaded prevailed on him to take up arms against Amrou. Ishmael, whose courage and ambition were equally great, resolved to take advantage of the Caliph's offer; and as he was already possessed of considerable territories in Transoxana, he resolved still more to aggrandize himself at the expence of Amrou, and even of the Caliph, who required his assistance.

Ishmael therefore marched out against Amrou; the latter advanced at the head of his troops to meet his enemy, and each of them was preparing to give signal proofs of bravery and military skill, when by an accident Ishmael was victorious, without being scarce obliged to draw a sword. Amrou's

* Saman was the son of a camel-driver, and for some time followed the same employment; but being a man of courage, he resolved to take up arms. He served his apprenticeship amongst a gang of robbers, of whom he soon became the leader. At last his son quitted that base course of life, and entered into the service of the Caliphs. He was raised so high, as to be able to give his children a good education, which they made so good an use of, as to attain the chief military commands. They obtained several governments, in which they fixed themselves as absolute sovereigns, and formed a Dynasty, of which Ishmael Samani was the founder.

MOTHADED.
Hegyra 289.
Ch. æt. 902.

horse being very fiery, suddenly took the bit betwixt his teeth, and carried his master to the enemy, who immediately took him, and kept him prisoner in their camp.

Amrou's troops being thus deprived of their general, instantly disbanded, and that great army was totally dispersed. Ishmael having kept Amrou prisoner in his camp during some time †, sent him to Mothaded, who put him to death in prison.

The Caliph amply rewarded Ishmael for the acceptable present he made him; he gave him the title of Padischad, that is to say, Emperor or Monarch; and thus confirmed to that prince and his posterity, prerogatives which daily tended to annihilate the power of the Caliphs.

In the 289th year of the Hegyra, Mothaded being on his death-bed, gave orders

† It is related that Amrou, on the very day he was taken prisoner, being extremely hungry, desired one of the soldiers that guarded him, forthwith to get him something to eat. The soldier took a piece of meat, and put it over the fire in the first utensil that came to hand, (which happened to be one of those kettles they made use of in the Levant, to feed and water their horses) and hastily hung it without much care on a forked stick. Whilst the meat was boiling, and no person there to watch it, a mastiff dog came and thrust his head into the kettle; but finding it too hot, he withdrew his head so violently, that the handle of the vessel fell over his neck, and he ran away with the kettle and the Sultan's dinner. That prince, who saw the action, fell into a violent fit of laughter; and some of his attendants having said that he had no great reason to laugh, considering his present situation, he answered; "I laugh, because my steward complained this morning that three hundred camels were not enough to carry my provisions and kitchen furniture, and now a single dog is enough to bear them away." Hist. Orient. par D'Herbelot.

that his prisoner Amrou should be starved to death; however, the Dynasty of the Soffarites was not ended by the death of that prince: it was continued by Thaher his grandson, who, after the defeat of his grandfather, retired to Sejestan, where he was proclaimed as sovereign and lawful successor of Amrou: but he did not long enjoy that dignity; for the same Ishmael having attacked him in that province, totally defeated his army, and sent him prisoner to the Caliph. This last event happened in the reign of Moktaphi, Mothaded's successor; and by those means Sejestan, and the other provinces appertaining to it, were annexed to the immense territories which Ishmael was before possessed of. Thus the Dynasty of the Soffarites was destroyed, and gave place to that of the Samanites, which was in the sequel totally ruined by the Gaznevites.

M O K T A P H I - B I L L A H.

The THIRTY-SIXTH CALIPH.

THIS prince was at Raccah, when his father died, and was there immediately proclaimed Caliph. In a short time he went to fix his residence at Bagdat, where the ceremony of his proclamation was repeated. Cassen, who was appointed vizir

MOKTAPHI. in the time of the late Caliph, had taken the precaution of causing the inhabitants to swear allegiance to him, the moment after Mothaded's death.

Cassim renders Badir odious to the Caliph, and causes his destruction.

According to El Makin, this vizir had formed a design to deprive Mochtaphi of the crown, in order to place it on the head of one of that prince's brothers: others assert, that he intended to seize it for himself. He had communicated this design to a Mussulman named Badir, a man greatly respected in Bagdat: but Cassim's scheme not having taken place, he considered that Badir might make an ill use of the confidence reposed in him, and occasion him to lose the Caliph's favour. In order therefore to obviate any unlucky event, Cassim resolved to lay the plot to the charge of him to whom he had communicated it: and going to the Caliph, he accused Badir of the crime of which he himself was guilty.

The Caliph, who entirely relied on the probity of his minister, gave credit to the accusation, and left to him the management of the prosecution against the supposed criminal. Cassim, thus armed with power, used all possible means for the destruction of Badir: he immediately strove to suborn some of his dependents. Badir having been informed of the base means that were used against him, began to provide for his safety, and retired to a strong place which belonged to him. This flight was represented to the Caliph.

Caliph by Cassem, as a new proof of Badir's MUKTAPHI.
 guilt; and the prince immediately sent a de- Hegyra 289.
 tachment of troops to besiege the fugitive in Ch. 27. 902.
 his fortress.

Whilst they were preparing to storm the castle, Cassem reflected that Badir might possibly demand a conference with the officer who commanded at the siege, and thereby all the baseness of his conduct might be disclosed. He therefore contrived another method of destroying him: he counterfeited the Caliph's hand-writing, and wrote a letter in the name of his master, in which that prince told Badir, that having caused due enquiry to be made into the matter of which he was accused, he was convinced he was innocent; and therefore he might come into his presence without fear. The vizir gave the letter to the chancellor, and directed him to send it to Badir, as coming immediately from the Caliph.

The chancellor complied with the vizir's order. The letter was delivered, and the unfortunate Badir, not suspecting the treacherous designs of Cassem, and besides, relying on his innocence, really thought the Caliph was undeceived: he therefore laid down his arms, and set out on his journey to Bagdat; but stopping a short time at an inn upon the road, some men hired by the vizir fell on him, and cut off his head, which they brought to Cassem. The wretch was so inhuman as to go in person and present it to

МОКТАФИ. the Caliph with great demonstrations of the joy he felt at the death of a traitor, who strove to deprive him of his crown.

Victory obtained over the Karmathians,

This melancholy event ushered in the reign of Moktaphi; during the sequel of it, they were continually engaged in war against the Karmathians, in which the Mussulmen and rebels gained equal advantages, and sustained equal losses. Zacarwiah, chief of the Karmathians, commenced hostilities by making an irruption into Syria at the head of his forces. He committed great devastations in that province, plundering many of the villages, and other places in the neighbourhood of the chief cities, and putting all to fire and sword. The Caliph forthwith caused a body of troops to march, who came up with those desperadoes, and attacked them so impetuously, that the first onset determined the victory. The Karmathians were broke and totally routed; and the famous Zacarwiah, who had formed such great designs for the advancement of his sect, fell in the action.

They commit new ravages.

Hussain, brother to that general, immediately supplied his place, and collecting the broken remains of his troops, he sent them for some time into quarters of refreshment; he also repaired the loss by some new detachments that joined him, and then made ready to go forth against the Mussulmen. This new leader was more successful than his brother; he repulsed the Caliph's troops, and became so formidable, that he made himself

himself master of several towns in Syria before their eyes, and without their being able to prevent it.

МОСТАФИ.

Hejyra 290.

Ch. ær. 903.

This news greatly afflicted the Caliph, who finding this extensive province on the point of falling a prey to those rebels, resolved to march in person to its relief. He accordingly departed at the head of one hundred thousand men to seek the Karmathians; but they having received information of the prodigious force they were like to have on their hands, took a resolution to avoid a battle, by endeavouring to retire into strong posts, where they presumed it would be hazardous to attack them.

But they had not time to execute their design; the Caliph's army, which had made forced marches, arrived at the very time they began their retreat, and attacked them on the spot. The rebels used all the means in their power to avoid an action; but finding they could not possibly continue their retreat, they boldly faced their enemy, and at first fought with amazing resolution: but they were forced to yield to superior strength and numbers. After a very warm dispute, the Karmathians strove to get possession of the ground near the Euphrates, in order to escape; but the way thereto was cut off. Hussain their general was made prisoner, with about three hundred of his troops, as well officers as soldiers, who were forthwith sent to Bagdat. Shortly after this signal victory, the Caliph

Hejyra 291.

Ch. ær. 904.

They are defeated in a second battle.

MOKTAPHI. Caliph arrived at that city, and condemned all the prisoners to death: their hands and feet were first cut off, and they were afterwards beheaded.

**Inroad of the
Turks into
Mawaralnahar.**

At this time advice was brought to Bagdat of the exploits of the Mussulmen living in the province of Mawaralnahar. The whole country was on a sudden over-run by the Turks who entered it under arms, to the number of seven hundred families. The first surprize occasioned by the arrival of such a multitude being over, the Mussulmen also took up arms, marched out to meet the Turks, surprized them, and made a terrible slaughter of such as stood on their defence: the rest of them took to flight, and were totally dispersed.

**Irruption of
the Greeks.**

About the same time the Greeks made an incursion, and laid waste part of the mussulman frontiers. They marched in ten different detachments, consisting of ten thousand men each, and dispersed themselves into ten different places, where they committed terrible ravages, and suddenly returned into their own country.

**Hegyra 292.
Ch. ar. 905.**

**End of the
Dynasty of the
Tholonites in
Egypt.**

The next year the Dynasty of the Tholonites, who had reigned some time in Egypt and Syria, became extinct. Haroun ebn Chemarawaïd having given the Caliph strong reasons to suspect him, that prince caused Egypt to be attacked both by sea and land. Haroun, who had retired to Mesrah, was besieged in that place, and defended it with great

great valour; but one of the archers of the Caliph's guard, having observed Haroun in a sally, let fly an arrow at him with so much strength and skill, that he killed him on the spot. His death put an end to the war; his troops surrendered their arms, and the provinces of Egypt and Syria returned to the immediate obedience of the Caliphs, their lawful sovereigns.

This event caused great joy at the court of Bagdat, which being free from disquietude as to those countries, were more at liberty to employ their forces in those parts where the new rebels had the greatest strength. They were soon forced to arm against the Karmathians, whose party was still formidable. Spight of their last defeat, they appeared again in a few months under a new chief called Zecroune, who penetrated into Arabia, and ravaged even as far as Irak. The Caliph, without delay, sent a body of troops against them; but the rebels laughed at his soldiers, and continued to plunder; and the two armies having faced each other near a place called Cadefia, the Caliph's troops were beat, and forced to retreat, to avoid a total rout.

The Karmathians being elated by this victory, marched into Syria, and plundered many considerable places, such as Basri, Adragueti, and others; after which they approached Damascus. The governor of that city was then in Egypt, and had left the place

MORTAPHI.

Hegyra 292.

Ch. 2r. 905.

The Karmathians take the field again with fresh troops.

Hegyra 293.
Ch. 2r. 906.

МОКТАРИ. place under the command of Salek his lieutenant; who sallied out and boldly attacked the rebels: but this step was attended with very bad success; he was defeated, and thought himself happy in getting back to the town.

The rebels at first proposed to besiege Damascus: but the city being too extensive, and their numbers not sufficient for such an enterprize, they contented themselves with levying heavy contributions. After this Zecroune departed, and marched his army towards Tiberias, where he was attacked by a large body of mussulman troops, commanded by Joseph ebn Ibrahim. That general broke and routed the Karmathians; and, without giving them time to rally, pursued them even to the Deserts, to a place called Souane, where another hot encounter happened; in which the rebels gained a complete victory. Whether they had found means to recruit their army, or whether despair encreased their courage, they fought furiously, and totally destroyed the mussulman troops; the conquerors plundered their camp, and put to the sword all such as had been taken prisoners.

Hegyra 294. Zecroune, ever thirsty for blood, and
Ch. ar. 907. greedy of pillage, caused his troops to march
They plunder a caravan, and towards Arabia the Desert, by which he
are defeated was informed, a caravan would pass in
by the Caliph's its way to Mecca: he accordingly met them,
troops. cruelly massacred the pilgrims, the merchants,

chants, and even the guides. He spared the MOKTAPHI.
 women's lives, and made them slaves : after Hegyra 294.
 which, he plundered the whole, and was Ch. xi. 907.
 preparing to march on some new enterprize,
 when he was overtaken by the troops of
 Moktaphi, who, on their arrival, immedi-
 ately began to engage them. The Karma-
 thians were disconcerted by this sudden at-
 tack. Zacroune perceiving it, did all that lay
 in his power to inspire them with a resolution
 equal to his own ; but having been stunned
 and disabled by a blow which he received in
 the head, his soldiers lost all courage, and suf-
 fered themselves to be slaughtered by the Mus-
 salmen. Only a small number of them esca-
 ped. Zecroune was taken, and died five days
 afterwards of the blow he had received. As
 they proposed to make a publick spectacle of
 him at Bagdat, they opened and embalm-
 ed his body, to grace the triumph of the
 victorious troops.

They therefore carried the body into Bag-
 dat, with plumes of feathers on its head ;
 his wife and the other prisoners made a part
 of the procession ; and after they had been
 shewed to the people, they were all put to
 death.

This was the last expedition during the Hegyra 295.
 Caliphate of Moktaphi. That prince died Ch. xi. 908.
 the following year, after having reigned Moktaphi's
 about six years. He was greatly esteemed death.
 for his attachment to religion, for his gene-
 rosity, and particularly for his gentle and
 sweet

MOCTADER. sweet disposition. El Makin says, he was low of stature, of a handsome physiognomy; that his complexion was a little tanned, and his beard very thick.

MOCTADER-BILLAH.

The THIRTY-SEVENTH CALIPH.

Disorders in the government, occasioned by the Caliph's youth.

MOCTADER, the son of Mothaded, was proclaimed Caliph after the death of Moktaphi his brother. He was but thirteen years old when he ascended the throne; and by reason of his youth, the great men of the state, the vizirs, and even the women, assumed the absolute direction of affairs; and this abuse was carried so far, that a princess was seen to preside in a court of judicature for the trial of criminals, by the consent of the judges and lawyers, who were well pleased to see such a president sitting in the Caliph's tribunal.

Hegyra 296.
Ch. xx. 909.

Nothing but disorder and confusion could result from such a government; and therefore murmurs were heard in all parts, above all against the vizir, who was accused of having countenanced the elevation of a child to the Caliphate, that he himself might govern with a more absolute sway. It was judged that these practices would be attended with bad consequences in the sequel; and men asserted, that this young prince being early

early accustomed to see the government in MOCTADER.
the hands of others, would never think of Hegyra 296.
intermeddling with publick affairs; and that Ch. 27. 909.
such men as should be employed in the mi-
nistry, would do all in their power to divert
him from interposing therein, that they
might, without interruption, make an ill
use of his name and authority, in order to
rule the state according as their interest and
pleasure required and directed.

The vizir was apprehensive that these Hoffain kills
murmurs would degenerate into a sedition, the vizir, and
which might probably occasion him to fall a assumes his
sacrifice, as he alone was blamed for the post.
election of Moctader; he therefore endea-
voured to quiet the minds of men, by de-
posing the young Caliph, and placing in his
stead Mohammed, the son of Mothadi: but
that prince dying in the mean while, he
cast his eyes on one of the sons of Mo-
tawakel, who also died at the time they
were making preparations for his election;
and the vizir himself was soon afterwards
assassinated by a prince of the house of Ha-
madan, named Hoffain.

It is asserted, that this prince was ambi-
tious of the post of vizir, and had incited
the people to murmur, and strove to irritate
them against that minister, in order to raise
him up enemies, and bring him into diffi-
culties. It is said, that the whole design
was privately laid in the seraglio, and that
Hoffain, who was uneasy to find the people
murmur

MOCTADER: murmur only, without proceeding to extremities, resolved himself to remove the obstacles to his advancement, and had therefore determined to slay the vizir.

He causes Abdallah to be proclaimed Caliph.

In a short time Hossain caused Abdallah, the son of Motaz, to be proclaimed Caliph; after which he gained possession of the imperial palace. This change was not effected without causing great tumults; in the midst of which, Moctader trembling for fear of his life, thought himself happy that he could make his escape in disguise. He fled for shelter to the house of one of his most faithful eunuchs called Munas.

Abdallah is killed, and Moctader replaced on the throne.

This trusty servant, without losing time, gathered together and encouraged the officers servants, and many other of the zealous dependants of that young prince, whom he put under arms, and in person led them to the palace, of which they easily made themselves masters, as all things were in a very confused and unsettled condition there; and having seized the new Caliph, they put him to death, by inclosing his head in a bag of quick-lime. By this sudden revolution, Moctader was replaced on the throne, and received anew the homage and compliments of the great men of the state, and of the people.

**Hegyra 297.
Ch. ar. 910.**

Although it was necessary after so violent a shock to have taken the wisest precautions, both for the safety of the prince's life, and the well-governing of the state, yet affairs returned

returned to the former channel; that is to MOCTADER.
 say, the grandees, the ladies, and the mi- Hegyra 297.
 nisters, assumed the supreme power, and Ch. xx. 919.
 continued to manage all publick business
 during the Caliph's minority.

Happily for that prince, the enemies of
 the mussulman empire did not take advan-
 tage of the intestine divisions which prevailed
 in his state, by engaging him in a foreign
 war, from which he would have found it
 very difficult to extricate himself with ho-
 nour.

An instance of this appeared in a revolt Hegyra 303.
 in Mesopotamia, which was occasioned by Ch. xx. 915.
 the same Hossain who had presumed to de- Hossain causes
 pose the Caliph. He wisely made his escape Mesopotamia
 from Bagdat, at the time of the revolution, to revolt.
 by means whereof Moctader regained the
 throne; and having wandered about for
 some time, he fixed his abode in Mesopota-
 mia, where he raised a party, by whose as-
 sistance he proposed to throw off the Caliph's
 authority.

Ratek, who was then Moctader's vizir, re-
 ceived orders to go into that province with a
 body of troops, and to endeavour to reduce
 the rebel. The vizir marched up to Hossain
 the head of a pretty numerous army, provided
 with a most magnificent field-equipage; but
 unfortunately Ratek was beat, and the equi-
 pages became a prey to the conquerors.

So soon as the news of this defeat reached He is betrayed
 the court, the eunuch Munas offered to by his own
 wipe troops.

MUCTADER. wipe off the disgrace which had fallen on
Hegyra 303. the mussulman arms, and undertook to get
Ch. ar. 915. the better of the rebel. He kept his word,
 and had not even the trouble of drawing a
 sword; for so soon as the enemy's army
 found that Munas had taken upon him
 the command of the mussulman troops, and
 was marching out against Hoffain, that re-
 bel was abandoned by his soldiers at the time
 he was entering Armenia. Munas having
 pursued him, the few troops that remained
 with Hoffain, fell on him and his son, bound
 them both in chains, and in that manner
 brought them to Munas, who led them in
 triumph to Bagdat, mounted on a camel, with
 a ridiculous cap on each of their heads, and
 cloathed in coats of goatskin. In this garb
 they were carried through the streets of Bag-
 dat, and afterwards closely confined in pri-
 son. This successful event caused an uni-
 versal joy; but it afforded a much greater
 pleasure to men of understanding, who being
 fully sensible, how much prudence was want-
 ing in the managers of the state, were full
 of fears, lest the neighbouring monarchs
 should take advantage of their misconduct.

Hegyra 304.
Ch. ar. 916.

Magnificent
 reception
 given to the
 Grecian am-
 bassadors.

But, far from taking such a step, the
 Greeks, who were the most formidable,
 used extraordinary means to fix the tranquil-
 lity of the two crowns. Ambassadors ar-
 rived at Bagdat from Constantine Porphyro-
 genetus, then emperor of Constantinople,
 under the tuition of the empress Zoe, his
 mother,

mother, who came to compliment the Caliph, and to negotiate a truce, and an exchange of prisoners.

MOCTADER.
Hegyra 304.
Ch. 2r. 916.

The great pomp with which they were received, was a manifest proof that their proposals would be accepted. The imperial palace was adorned with the richest furniture; arms of all kinds were placed in view; all the Caliph's guard was drawn up in the great square to the number of fifty thousand men, to whom they publickly gave their pay in purses of gold. In another place appeared four thousand white eunuchs, and three thousand black eunuchs, with seven hundred ushers to guard the gates and avenues to the palace. Within side, and round about it, were put up thirty thousand cloths before the doors, to keep out the wind, of which twelve thousand were of silk, and five hundred of gold brocade, with twelve thousand five hundred pieces of tapestry of excellent workmanship.

In the midst of the great hall, in which they gave audience to the ambassadors, was a tree of massy gold, which had (amongst others) eighteen large principal branches, and thereon were placed birds of gold and silver, which clapped their wings, and warbled out various notes. This tree caused great surprize in the spectators, who could not sufficiently admire so curious and incomprehensible a piece of mechanism.

There were also mock engagements on the water; a great number of boats, paint-

MOCTADER. ed and gilt, appeared on the Tygris, which
 Hegyra 304. formed squadrons distinguished by their fe-
 Ch. ær. 916. veral colours. The crews were neat and
 fine, and some of them very richly dressed.
 These boats represented several naval actions;
 and were managed with the utmost order and
 dexterity.

These festivals being over, the truce and
 exchange of prisoners were agreed on ; and
 at the signing of the treaty, magnificent pre-
 sents were made to the ambassadors. The
 vizir and chief men of the state, who had
 conducted them to their first audience, re-
 conducted them with the same pomp, when
 they had their audience of leave; and at their
 departure, the eunuch Munas was com-
 manded to attend them to the frontiers :
 there that officer paid into their hands one
 hundred thousand gold crowns, for the ran-
 som of the mussulman captives.

So noble a reception dazzled the ambas-
 sadors, and gave them the highest idea of
 the Caliph's court. The description they
 gave of it when they returned to Constanti-
 nople, made a deep impressiion upon the
 emperor's council ; and they were highly
 pleased at having taken the first steps towards
 a treaty with a prince, whose power they
 concluded to be equal with his riches and
 magnificence.

And without doubt it would have equal-
 led them, had the government been in bet-
 ter hands ; but the sovereign having from
 his youth been used not to trouble himself

with business, he differed very little in his conduct when he came to riper years. The ladies, the grandees, and the vizirs, were masters of the state ; and the indolent Moc-tader, who was not wanting in abilities, thought, that by displaying his grandeur, he fully performed the duty of a sovereign.

MOCTADER.
Hegyra 304.
Ch. ar. 916.

However, he received some uneasiness on account of the Karmathians, who were again in motion ; and he took the trouble of examining into the particulars of that affair. After the death of Zecroune, their last commander, they chose in his stead one of their chief officers called Abu Saïd, which was also the name of their general, who was killed in the reign of Mothaded.

Hegyra 305.
Ch. ar. 917.

The Karma-
thians fix
themselves at
Hejar, which
they make
their capital.

The new leader pushed on his advantages ; he made conquests in Chaldea, Syria, and Mesopotamia, and at last set himself up as sovereign in the city of Hejar, the ancient capital of Arabia Petrea. With this conquest his reign was terminated ; for he was assassinated in that capital by one of his slaves, whilst he was in the bath. This event happened in the 301st year of the Hegyra.

Abu Saïd was succeeded by his eldest son ; but as he was of a very weakly constitution, the council of the Karmathians resolved, that he should surrender the command to Abu Thaher, his younger brother, so soon as the latter should be of due age.

Abu Thaher having attained the age of about nineteen years, did not wait till his

Abu Thaher
pretends to
be inspired.

MOCTADER.
Hegyra 305.
Ch. ær. 917.

brother resigned his authority : he seized it, and gave out that he was inspired by heaven, and that God had revealed to him the most hidden things. By these means he seduced the most ignorant of his sect; and as enthusiasm is a very catching distemper, the Karmathians soon looked on Abu Thaher as a prophet : and at last he was proclaimed as sole prince and chief of that sect.

Hegyra 311.
Ch. ær. 923.

He gained an implicit obedience from them, by often telling them of the future grandeur of the nation, and of the great conquests which heaven had appointed him to make. Each Karmathian offered to risque his life and fortune in the service of the new prince and prophet. These offers were very agreeable to Abu Thaher, who did not think fit to let them cool ; he marched out at the head of those determined men, and laid siege to Basorah. This enterprize proved successful ; the city was taken by assault : he caused almost all the inhabitants to be massacred ; and then gave up the place to be pillaged for fifteen days.

He seizes Basorah.

Hegyra 312.
Ch. ær. 924.

He plunders a caravan.

Elated by this success, Abu Thaher entered on new designs. Amongst others, he attacked a caravan returning from Mecca. It was numerous, and consisted of many persons of note, who were conducted by a Mussulman of distinction named Abdallah. The Karmathian falling with his troops on the caravan, slew part of them, dispersed the rest, and seized all that the pilgrims

grims were possessed of. Abdallah their chief having been taken prisoner, Thaher proposed to make use of his captive, in order to come to some terms with the court of Bagdat. With that view he took great care of Abdallah, and treated him with the utmost civility. He also sent the chief men of the sect to visit him, and did all that lay in his power to gain his friendship.

MOCTADER.
Hegyra 312.
Ch. ær. 924.

When Abu Thaher thought he had gained the good will of his prisoner, he imparted to him his design of making peace with the Caliph: and desired he would befriend him in that matter with Moctader, to whom he proposed to send an embassy with proposals for an accommodation. He added that as a proof of the sincerity of his intentions, he that moment would set him at liberty, and begged of him to make use of it, in preparing the court of Bagdat to lend a favourable ear to the terms he shortly intended to offer.

Abdallah was dismissed on the spot; and when they had given him time enough to mollify the Caliph, ambassadors were sent to Bagdat with costly presents for Moctader. That prince gave a gracious reception to the ambassadors, and treated them and all their train with as much affability and politeness, as if they had been sent to him by a real sovereign.

He proposes terms to the Caliph, which are rejected.

This kind treatment gave the envoy hopes that Abu Thaher's terms would be accepted;

MOCTADER. however they were all totally rejected. And
Hegyra 312. indeed his demands were a little extrava-
Ch. ar. 924. gant. The Karmathians required, that the
 city of Basorah should be absolutely ceded
 to him; and that they should add to it the
 province of Ahwaz, to be erected into a
 principality for him and his descendants.

As he was perfectly well acquainted with
 the situation of affairs at the court of Bagdat,
 he concluded that a government so weak
 would make no difficulty to purchase a peace
 at that price: but the Caliph thought his
 terms exorbitant; and without giving any
 other answer, absolutely refused to accept
 them.

Abu Thaher was greatly surprised when
 his ambassadors, on their return, related to
 him the Caliph's answer. Insensibly his sur-
 prise was turned into rage; he resolved to
 take revenge for the slight that had been put
 upon his terms, which were indeed highly
 advantageous to him, but would at the same
 time have restored quiet to the empire.
 He therefore retook the field the following
 year, and made new conquests in the mussul-
 man territories. He attacked and seized many
 towns, and in particular made terrible ha-
 vock in the country round about Cufah.
Hegyra 313. He besieged that city, took it by assault,
Ch. ar. 925. gave it up to be plundered for several days,
 and slew the greatest part of the inhabitants;
 such of them as escaped the fury of the con-
 querors, were reduced to a state of slavery.

Abu Thaher
seizes Cufah.

It is not said that any steps were then taken MOCTADER.
at the court of Bagdat, to curb the insolence of Hegyra 315.
this rebel. He therefore continued his rava- Ch. 27. 927.
ges without interruption, till about the 315th He defeats the
year of the Hegyra, when the Caliph sent out Caliph's
a body of troops against him, under the com- troops.
mand of one of his officers named Joseph.
The Karmathians, encouraged by their suc-
cess, despised the Caliph's army; and Joseph
having risked an action, his troops were de-
feated, and for the most part put to the
sword, and he himself taken prisoner.

This victory was a fresh incitement to Abu He makes in-
Thaher to persevere; however, it seems his ursions to the
intention was rather to intimidate the Caliph, neighbour-
than to make conquests; for having formed hood of Bag-
a design of approaching Bagdat, he only took dat.
with him a flying camp of four hundred
horse, with which he threw the whole neigh-
bourhood, and even the capital, into the
greatest consternation. Moctader caused ten
thousand men to march out, and to endea-
vour to carry off the detachment; but the
Caliph's troops returned without having made
the least attempt.

Abu Thaher having returned with the
same expedition as he came, appeared again,
and made a shew of attacking Anbar, a city
of Arabian Irak, twenty leagues from Bagdat;
but it was no more than a feint, and he
again marched back. The court was so ter-
rified at this new proceeding, that so soon as
they

MOCTADER. they heard of the Karmathians departure, they heard of the Karmathians departure, the Caliph, the ministers, and the ladies, who had a share in the government, returned thanks to God for the happy event, and distributed fifty thousand crowns in alms to the poor. Abu Thaher was not idle; he soon appeared and alarmed them in other parts, and returned almost as suddenly. The poor were likewise benefited by this event; for they received on this occasion alms to the amount of one hundred thousand drachmas.

Hegyra 316. Thus the Karmathian spent his time in making incursions, in order to exhaust the Caliph's treasury in alms-giving: he was not indeed obliged to think of making a defence, for they did not cause any troops to march out against him till a long time was passed. He suspended his incursions to give rest to his troops; and made use of that juncture to go to Hejar, where he built a magnificent palace.

Hegyra 317. Whilst the Caliph entertained hopes of enjoying a little quiet at Bagdat, in consequence of the retreat of the rebels, a revolution of a most extraordinary kind happened at court. **MOCTADER** was deposed from the Caliphate. **CAHER**, his brother, was placed on the throne, and afterwards removed, to give way to **MOCTADER**. These transactions all passed in a very short time. The following is the account of that singular event, given us by El Makin.

The

The eunuch Munas, who was so firmly attached to his prince, that he had procured him to be replaced on the throne at the time an attempt was made to deprive him of the crown, either really had, or thought he had, great reason to be dissatisfied with the conduct of the Caliph, who, as Munas declared, had formed a design of arresting him. Of this he complained to his friends; and the prince being informed of his suspicions, was pleased to strive to undeceive him, as to the information which he pretended had been given him.

Munas doubting of the Caliph's sincerity, and thinking himself in danger so long as that prince remained on the throne, resolved to deprive him of the crown, and to place it on the head of Caher; which he hoped to accomplish with the greater facility, as he was in the highest credit with the soldiery. He therefore went one day to the imperial palace with a body of horse, and having forced his way into the Caliph's apartment, he seized that prince, and the princess his mother, and sent them both to his own house. On leaving the palace he told the troops, that all it contained was their own, and that they might plunder without fear. The soldiers were far from being backward in taking advantage of the permission, and in a very short time they carried off from the palace all the gold and silver they could lay their hands on.

Munas

MOCTADER. Munas having thus got Moctader into his power, compelled him to surrender the Caliphate; and that prince did so on the spot, in presence of many witnesses: they then brought forth Caher, his brother, whom Munas caused to be proclaimed Caliph by the soldiery; and couriers were immediately dispatched to all the provinces, to inform the people of that event.

The soldiery
depose Caher,
and replace
Moctader on
the throne.

But on the next day another revolution happened, which restored things to their former state. The troops demanded their pay: but affairs being in such a condition, that the new Caliph was unable to satisfy their demands, they were intreated to have a little patience. Enraged at the delay, they entered the palace in a tumultuous manner, killed an officer called Baruc, who had lately been appointed captain of the guard by Caher, and began to cry out Moctader! Moctader! At this cry, part of the soldiers went to the house of Munas, took out Moctader, and brought him in triumph to the palace: Those who began the tumult, seeing him appear, pulled down Caher from the throne, placed Moctader thereon, and instantly brought his brother before him, to know how he should be dealt with. They, for the most part, required he should be put to death.

But at sight of him, the Caliph, being himself greatly disconcerted at these strange events, gave him his hand, saying to him,
“Come

"Come near, brother, you are not guilty of what has passed; be comforted," added he, embracing him, "I swear that I will never do you the least ill turn." Caher only returned this short answer: "O commander of the faithful, God knows my heart." As to Munas, he quitted Bagdat the instant that Moctader reascended the throne; but he kept up a correspondence there, which soon caused a new revolution.

The Karmathians, who had remained quiet during these commotions, soon took the field again. They marched from the province of Baharein, where Abu Thaher had fixed their quarters, and took the road to Mecca, under the conduct of that prince. Their march was but one continued ravage, which became more furious as they approached the neighbourhood of that city; they afterwards laid siege to Mecca, carried it by storm, and slew more than thirty thousand persons. But what must have given infinitely greater concern to all true Mussulmen, was their profanation of the temple of the Caabah: they took away the famous black stone, which, ever since the days of Mahomet, had been held in the highest veneration by the Mussulmen. They filled with dead bodies the well of Zemzem, so famous, and held in so great reverence by the Arabians: in short, they did all in their power to insult the whole nation, and the Caliph in particular, who, as the head of religion,

MOCTADER.
Hegyra 317.
Ch. ær. 929

Hegyra 318.
Ch. ær. 930.
The Karma-
thians plunder
Mecca.

MOCTADER.
Hegyra 318.
Ch. ær. 930.

ligion, must have been affected in a most lively manner with the indignities committed in a city, which had been the nursery of Musulmanism.

Hegyra 319.
Ch. ær. 931.

They make
incursions to
the neighbour-
hood of Bag-
dat.

Having thus pillaged Mecca, Abu Thaher marched towards Bagdat; and leaving the main body of his troops in a place at a considerable distance, he went with about one thousand men to skirmish in the neighbourhood of that capital; after which he passed the Tygris, and advanced so near, that it was high time to think of stopping his progress. The Caliph appointed to the command on that occasion, one of his captains named Abu Sage, who having assembled about thirty thousand men, marched out and encamped at some distance from the post which Thaher occupied. He sent one of his officers to reconnoitre the rebel's forces, and finding that they amounted to no more than one thousand men, he wrote to the Caliph, and with great confidence assured him that he would soon deliver up Thaher to him as a prisoner, to be dealt with according to his pleasure. Moctader being delighted with this promise, and being always apprehensive that the enemy would elude him, wrote back on the spot, and commanded his general forthwith to break down the bridge on the Tygris, that he might not make his escape.

Abu Sage de-
pises the ene-
my, which
causes the de-
struction of
the Caliph's
troops.

Abu Sage, relying on his superior numbers, did not deign at first to draw a sword against the Karmathian; and as he had formerly

merly been acquainted with him, he sent an officer to inform him, that out of regard to the friendship that had once subsisted between them, he would now advise him to surrender, or to take the most speedy means for making his escape. Môctader.
Hegyra 319.
Ch. 2r. 931.

Abu Thaher, who was one of the most unlikely men in the world to relish such advice, asked the number of Abu Sage's troops? The officer answering, that he had thirty thousand men. "Tell him from me," replied the Karmathian, "that if he has thirty thousand men, he has not three such fellows as mine are." Thereupon he caused three of his soldiers to be called, and commanded the first to stab himself, and he obeyed without the least hesitation: he ordered the second to throw himself into the Tygris, and he forthwith precipitated himself into the river: and the third, he commanded to ascend a lofty tower, and throw himself down to the bottom, and he immediately did so. Then addressing himself to the mussulman officer, who had been a witness of what had passed, "Do you think," said he, "that a prince who has such soldiers, need fear the great number of his enemies? For your part, I will give you quarter; because you do no more than your master has commanded: but depend upon it, you shall soon see your general chained up amongst my dogs."

The mussulman officer being returned, and having given an account of what he had seen

MOCTADER.
Hegyr 319.
Ch. 2r. 931.

seen and heard, Abu Sage treated the speech of the Karmathian as a ridiculous bravado, for which he would soon give him due correction ; and he deferred taking the necessary steps to surround him (as he had promised the Caliph) till the next day ; but the Karmathian did not give him an opportunity. As he was persuaded that the Mussulmen, depending on their superiority of numbers, would be off their guard, he resolved to be before-hand with them, and to attack them as soon as possible in their camp : and therefore, on the envoy's departure, Abu Thaher sent out some persons to reconnoitre the posture of the enemy ; and having considered the account they gave him of the mussulman encampment, he issued orders for an attack the following night.

The Karmathians, assisted by the darkness, having approached undiscovered, fell on a sudden upon Abu Sage's camp with such fury, that great part of his troops were slain, before it was well known that the enemy was in the camp ; and the slaughter continued for a long time. This terrible alarm so intimidated the Mussulmen, that they could not be prevailed on to make use of their weapons in their own defense. A great number of them took to flight ; and some of the fugitives, not knowing whither they went, (so dark was the night) fell in amongst the Karmathians, who knocked them on the head. Abu Sage assembled round

round about him a number of his bravest soldiers; but their resistance was ineffectual; the Karmathians cut them in pieces, and at last seized Abu Sage himself, whom they brought to their general. Abu Thaher dealt with him as he had threatened to do, when the mussulman officer came to persuade him to surrender; he chained him up amongst his dogs.

MOCTADER.
Hegyra 319.
Ch. ær. 931.

Abu Thaher contenting himself with having gained so considerable an advantage in the very fight of the court, retired with his prisoners and the booty he had taken; and by his departure tranquillity was restored to the city of Bagdat.

But a storm soon arose, which brought about a revolution. Although Moctader had promised Caher that he would bury in oblivion the injury he had done him in depriving him of the Caliphate, yet he caused him to be seized and put in prison. Kon-demir, from whom this fact is taken, adds, that the Caliph intended to put him to death. It is probable that Caher did not entertain a due sense of his brother's clemency, but had been guilty of some new crime; and it appears, that from the time of the insurrection by which Caher was placed on the throne, he kept up his connections with Munas, and found means, though a prisoner, to carry on a correspondence with him, by the assistance of one of that eunuch's brothers, who lived at Bagdat: for as to Munas, he had

The Caliph
orders Caher
to be apprehended.

MOCTADER. kept himself at a distance ever since the injury he had done to Moctader, by raising his
 Hegyra §19. brother to the throne.
 Ch. 27. 931.

Munas, who was doubtless weary of being thus condemned to banishment, of which he could expect no end so long as Moctader lived, agreed with Caher to destroy that prince. The eunuch imparted the secret to a barbarian, a bold intrepid man, and ready to undertake any thing for money; so that, in consideration of a large sum which was promised him, he engaged to kill the Caliph. The assassin had a qualification which recommended him to Moctader: he was the best horseman in the country; and as the Caliph took great delight in tilts and tournaments, he often entertained his court with that diversion; at which the barbarian was always present, and gained great admiration for his skill and agility.

He is assassinated.

One day when a tournament was held by order of the Caliph in the principal square of Bagdat, the barbarian appeared, and pleased the whole assembly, by the graceful manner in which he managed his horse, and by the dexterity he shewed in running at the head. The Caliph caused him to repeat it several times; and as the guard, which surrounded that prince, prevented him from seeing all that passed in the square, he ordered them to fall back into a line on each side of him, that his view might not be interrupted: the barbarian thus finding
 the

the way open to the prince, galloped to-
wards him, and thrusting a lance into his
breast, rode off full speed.

Mootader.
Hegyra 319.
Ch. xxi. 931.

His design was to have gone instantly to
the prison where Caher was confined, and
to have imparted the event to persons ex-
pressly provided, who only waited his arrival
to force open the prison-doors; but he did
not go so far: in crossing the market-place,
his horse, who was startish, took fright on
seeing an ass loaded with brush faggots,
which dragged on the ground. The noise
occasioned the horse to rear up against a
butcher's stall, and the assassin was hung by
the throat on one of the hooks, his horse at
the same time running away from under
him.

The assassin's
death.

The Caliph's attendants, who pursued
the murderer, soon came there, and finding
him thus hanging, and almost dead, they
prepared to make him feel a more exquisite
punishment for his crime, whilst he was yet
alive. They took the load of faggots which
were at hand, put them under the barbarian,
set them on fire, and burned him.

As to the Caliph, he fell the moment he
received the wound, and died in a short
time. He was about thirty-eight years old,
and had reigned near twenty-five years. He
left three children, Radi, Moktaphi, and
Mothi, who all reigned after Caher their
uncle.

MOCTADER.

Hegyta 319.
Ch. xxx. 931.The manner
in which El
Makin relates
the Caliph's
death.

The death of Moctader is related in a different manner by other authors. El Makin says, that Munas having been informed that Moctader had formed a resolution of taking him by force from his asylum, and putting him in prison, had collected a body of troops, and came and sat down before Bagdat : that the Caliph put himself at the head of his own forces, and marched out to attack him; and that a bloody action ensued, in the heat of which Moctader having been taken by a body of barbarians, was killed by one of them, who cut off his head and presented it to Munas.

Abul Faragius
differs in his
account of
this, and some
other circum-
stances of his
reign.

Abul Faragius indeed agrees, that Munas came with forces to attack Bagdat ; but he gives us to understand, that he did not mean to bend his force against the Caliph; and that his design was only to take revenge of the vizir, with whom he was highly offended. He adds, that at the time Munas laid siege to Bagdat, the Caliph was an utter stranger both to his revolt and his proceedings ; and that being under the greatest surprize to be attacked at a time he was so unprepared to sustain a siege, his ministers advised him to go out to meet his enemy, in such a manner as might either mollify him, or prevail on his troops to desert him ; and the best expedient they could contrive was, that the Caliph attended by the doctors of the law, each having the Koran open on his breast, should appear

appear before the besiegers, on which they MOCTADER.
 doubted not but the greatest part of the re- Hegyra 319.
 bels would quit Munas, and come to the Ch. ar. 931.
 Caliph's assistance.

This advice was followed, but without success. The Caliph went out of Bagdat, and would have approached the enemy's camp; but, instead of seeing the besiegers come to join him, he was abandoned even by those that had accompanied him: he therefore resolved to return into the city, when he was met by some soldiers. As they appeared to have no good design, Moctader said to them, "Remember I am the Caliph." "We know thee well, base man," replied they, and one of them having given him a blow which felled him, the others put an end to his life. They then stripped him, cut off his head, and left the body naked in the midst of a field, where it was found by a labourer, who dug a grave and buried it on the spot. The head having been brought to Munas, it is said he was filled with grief to find, that his vengeance, which was designed only against the vizir, had caused the destruction of the Caliph. This is the account given by Abul Faragius.

The same author, speaking of the character of this prince, says, That though he was no more than thirteen years of age when he ascended the throne, he shewed he had no mind to be governed; that all Bagdat talked of the spirit he shewed; and that the vizir

MOCTADER. suspecting the young prince of a design to take away his post, formed a project to deprive him of the crown, and to place it on the head of Caher; but that the minister changed his opinion, when he found the Caliph was better inclined towards him. Abul Faragius adds, that the vizir was shortly afterwards assassinated by Hossain ebn Hamadan, who having been concerned with the vizir in the conspiracy against the Caliph, was apprehensive that minister would one day make the prince his enemy. The same author continuing his relation, says, That Hossain persisting in the design he had formed with the vizir, found means to drive Moctader from the throne, of which he had just taken possession; that to this end he caused Motasssem to be proclaimed, and gave him the surname of Moctadi-Billah; that he afterwards caused it to be signified to Moctader, that he must quit the imperial palace; that the young prince desired he would wait till the next day, which having been granted, he took advantage of the respite, and prepared for his defence; that Hossain coming on the morrow with the new Caliph to take possession of the palace, found all Moctader's attendants under arms, who refused him entrance: that they came to blows, the action was bloody, and lasted the whole day; and that at length Moctader's party prevailed, and Hossain escaped into Mesopotamia. Motasssem, who was thus illegally made Caliph, and

and who had appointed a vizir, fled into the MOCTADER.
Desert with his minister; and this is the ac- Hegyra 319.
count given by Abul Faragius of the first Ch. ar. 931.
deposing of Moctader.

In a short time that prince, who is represented by some authors, and particularly by El Makin, as a man of the utmost indolence, soon shewed the contrary, according to Abul Faragius. A sedition arose in Bagdat, which was probably occasioned by the secret practices of Hossain and his party. The citizens and merchants were robbed or assassinated in their own houses; and the mutineers threatened to plunder the whole city. Moctader in person headed his troops, put part of the rebels to the sword, and such as they seized were soon afterwards publicly executed.

In writing the life of Moctader I have followed the opinion of El Makin, which seemed to me the more probable, as Abul Faragius himself, who has described that prince, as so active and valorous in his earliest youth, has not through his whole reign furnished us with another proof in support of that assertion: whereas, according to the picture drawn of him by El Makin, he was indolent at the beginning, and continued so to be until his death.

During the reign of this prince, a famous Story of Hossain Hallage.
man, named Hossain Hallage, was executed. He had for a long time gained great respect from the people in the several parts
Z 4 where

MOCTADER. where he had inhabited : he was supposed to have the gift of revelation, and it was reported that he could discover the most secret thoughts. He led a very austere life ; and it is even asserted, that during a long residence in Arabia, he lived a whole year in a cave, bare-headed, and unprovided of rayment suitable to the different seasons : he fasted often in the year, and for many days together took no food ; after which he broke his fast, only by eating three mouthful of bread and drinking a little water.

His discourse was suitable to his wife conduct ; he preached up the strictest morality, and above all spoke of the love of God with so great zeal and enthusiasm, as might persuade the hearers he was thoroughly affected by it. " Seventy years have passed," would he often say, " since the divine flame was first lighted up in my entrails ; they would have been entirely consumed, but for a spark of him who is sovereign truth, which gave a new life to my ashes. He alone, who is inflamed by the same fire, can tell how great is my burning." After which he cried out, " Oh ! divine love, fly to my succour, that we may be inseparably united ; thou alone, O Lord, knowest the condition of a heart which burneth with the love of thee."

He often mixed with his discourse many things which have induced some authors to believe he was a Christian. For example, he often cried out in a transport, " Be he
for

for ever praised, who manifested to us his MOCTADER. humanity, concealing at the same time his Hegya 319. divinity, which pervades all things, inso- Ch. 27. 931. much that he condescended to appear amongst us, eating and drinking like us." And at the time sentence of death was passed on him, he only said, "He that invites me to the banquet, does me no wrong in making me drink of the cup which he himself drank of before his death." This was the very language of the martyrs.

But the same enthusiast, who was suspected of being a Christian, observed the mussulman law with the greatest punctuality, and performed the pilgrimage to Mecca, as a follower of Mahomet: and it was even on account of this pilgrimage, that a dispute arose which brought him to a shameful end.

This catastrophe happened at Bagdat, where he came to reside about the 309th year of the Hegyra, after having dwelt a long time at Mecca. His austerity, his piety, and the religious strain which abounded in his discourse, all contributed to gain him a great number of followers, but at the same time to raise up against him many enemies, especially amongst the doctors of the mussulman law, who resolved to destroy him. They therefore diligently sought for the means of accusing him; and as they could find no fault with his life, they confined themselves to his doctrine. Their first attempts to dis-
cover

MOCTADER. COVER some error therein was fruitless; he
 Hegyra 319. boldly stood the trial, and fully refuted all
 Ch. 27. 931. their arguments; but the doctors having
 been informed he had taught his disciples
 that they might dispense with themselves
 from performing the journey to Mecca, his
 adversaries stuck to that point, and thereon
 he was condemned.

He was interrogated therefore, whether a man might decline going a pilgrimage to Mecca? He answered (agreeable to what he had already advanced in his writings) "That he might absolutely do so, but on the following conditions: First, He must set apart a room of his house, which must be kept very neat and clean, but without the least furniture. Secondly, That he should permit no person to enter therein. Thirdly, That all the accustomed ceremonies were to be performed, and the usual prayers recited there. Fourthly, That after having observed all the duties prescribed by the law, as an equivalent for the trouble, fatigue and hazard of the journey, which was dispensed with, he should assemble together thirty orphans in the same place, who should be clothed and fed during thirty days. He was besides personally to wait on them at table, and upon dismissing them, give to each thirty drachmas."

At this rate, the dispensation for the voyage to Mecca should seem to have been set at a high price; and indeed, what the prisoner

prisoner substituted in the place of that pil-
grimage, might have seemed very reason-
able to a Mussulman : but yet it was the
cause of his condemnation. The Cadi, or
chief magistrate, judged him worthy of
death, and the rest of the assembly joined
with him in opinion.

MOCTADER.
Hegyra 319.
Ch. xx. 931.

When sentence was passed, the prisoner calmly said to his judges, " You ought not to have dipped your hands in my blood; my faith is the same with that of all true Mussulmen ; my doctrine is truly orthodox, and I have always carefully followed the traditions of our forefathers ; my writings will incontestably prove this fact. You condemn me from human views ; your sentence is unjust ! My sole consolation is, that I die innocent ; and just heaven will surely revenge my death."

This pretended criminal was soon executed ; and they put him to as painful a death, as if he had committed the most atrocious crimes. They first cruelly scourged him with rods ; after which they cut off his arms and legs, and at last his head. The trunk and limbs were forthwith burned, and the ashes thrown into the Tygris. As to the head, it was fixed on the point of a lance, and set up in a publick part of the city.

El Makin relates, that Moctader was favourable to the Christians ; and that a governor of Egypt having laid a tax on the bishops, monks, &c. in the year 313, that prince

MOCTADER.
Hegyra 319.
Ch. æt. 931.

prince took it off again, and ordered, that they should be suffered to enjoy the immunities which the author of their vocation had granted to them.

The same writer adds, That in the said year 313, there appeared in Egypt a bright radiant star, followed by an immense red flame, which reached from north to south, and appeared to be thirty fathoms long, and about two fathoms broad, wreathed like a serpent.

Rise of the
Dynasty of the
Fatimites.

During the reign of this prince, and about the 298th year of the Hegyra, Abu Mohammed Obeidallah, who may be called the Founder, or at least the forerunner of the Dynasty of the Fatimites, so famous in the mussulman history, established himself in Africa. He claimed to be descended from Ali, the prophet's son-in-law, and in order to gain still greater respect and veneration, he drew his pedigree from Ali, by Fatima, Mahomet's favourite daughter. For which cause, instead of calling himself barely an Alian, he chose rather to assume the name of a Fatimite; a name which was borne by his descendants, and under which they reigned a long time in Africa and Egypt.

The descent of those princes from Ali and Fatima was strongly contested. And Dabebi, an old Arabian author, says that none but ignorant persons would call them Fatimites; and that, far from being descended from so illustrious a stock, he knew, from undoubted

undoubted authority, that Obeidallah was MOCTADER.
 either one of the Magi, or a Jew by re- Hegyra 319.
 ligion, and a locksmith by profession; and Ch. 2r. 931.
 that he had for a long time carried on his
 trade at Salamiah, a town in the district of
 Emessa in Syria.

But however that was, it is certain that
 Obeidallah made a great figure amongst the
 Mussulmen; and that having given himself
 out to be a prophet, he soon gained a great
 number of disciples, whom he put under
 arms, and by whose means he made conquests.
 His first expedition was against the Aglabites,
 so called from Aglab, who having been ap-
 pointed by Haroun governor of the province
 of Africa, found means to make himself ab-
 solute master of the country, and thereto
 to add other conquests; of all which he and
 his posterity had continued to be the sove-
 reigns, from the 184th year of the Hegyra
 to the 298th year of the same, at which
 time Ziadat-Allah, the last prince of that
 Dynasty, was defeated by Obeidallah, and
 deprived of his dominions. The latter main-
 tained his ground against his enemies, and
 transmitted his power to his descendants,
 who after having reigned many years in
 Africa with great tranquillity, conquered
 Egypt from the Akschidians. Mention will
 often be made of that illustrious family in
 the sequel of this history.

CAHER.

Hegyra 320.

Ch. ar. 932.

C A H E R-B I L L A H.

The THIRTY-EIGHTH CALIPH.

Caher's
wicked dis-
position.

CAHER, third son of Mothaded, who was in prison at the time of his brother's death, was immediately afterwards released, in order to be placed on the throne. This prince was remarkable only on account of his vices. He was capricious and cruel, without honour, without feeling, excessively covetous, and made use of all, even the most barbarous means, to gratify his passion for money. Such is the picture historians have given us of the monster whom the Saracens proclaimed Caliph after Moctader. Happily his reign was short. On account of his crimes he lost his crown, after having worn it about eighteen months; and the miserable life he led from the time of his deprivation, was a just, but too mild a punishment for the wickedness of his reign.

So soon as this prince was in possession of the throne, he gave signal proofs of his avarice and cruelty, by causing a strict enquiry to be made touching all such as had lived with Moctader, that he might take from them the riches they had received from him. He did not even spare his own mother, (who was also mother to the late Caliph,) he caused her to appear before him,
and

and asked her were she had placed her riches? The princess having answered that she had no money, and that her whole property consisted in cloaths and household-furniture; Caher, who firmly believed the contrary, threatened her with the most rigorous treatment, if she did not immediately make a discovery of her money and jewels. And as she still persisted in denying, he commanded that she should be hanged up by the heels in his presence, and was so barbarous as to strike her with his own hands, saying at each blow, "Tell me, where is your money?" The princess continuing steadfastly to affirm that she was not mistress of any, he caused her to be loosed, and sent back to her apartment, where she shortly died.

CAHER.

Hegyra 320.
Ch. 21. 932.

As Caher was determined at all events to get some money from his mother, he resumed all the donations and presents she had made, and moreover caused all her furniture and effects to be publickly sold. The messengers who came to put the infamous order in execution found her alive; but this cruel blow served to hasten her approaching end.

He bestowed the same kind of treatment on the friends and servants of his late brother: the greatest part of them were put to the torture, that they might be forced to give up their substance, which was the only way of avoiding those horrid torments. Even his vizir was not exempt from his fury. He had just nominated to that post a person of great credit

Hegyra 321.
Ch. 21. 933.

amongst

CAHER.

Hegyra 321.

Gh. æt. 933.

amongst the Mussulmen, called Ebn Moclach. He was vizir under the preceding Caliph; but either through caprice of the prince, or court intrigues, he remained only one year in that office, and lived privately till the advancement of Caher, who restored him to his post; and in a short time, for some disgust which is not particularly mentioned, caused his right hand to be cut off, and yet continued him in the same employment.

A conspiracy
formed to de-
pose Caher.

These horrid and repeated cruelties raised the indignation of the people, and particularly of the nobles, who were continually apprehensive, that the savage Caher would deal with them in like manner, in order to seize their estates. A conspiracy was therefore formed by three amongst them to shake off the yoke, and free the state from so oppressive a tyrant.

Munas was one of the first that engaged to revenge the honour of the crown, so scandalously sullied by the avarice and cruelty of the sovereign. Balik, the high chamberlain, joined Munas, and prevailed on his son Ali to engage in the plot. It was thought they might safely impart it to the vizir Moclach, who was very ready to assist in dethroning a prince who had so cruelly used him. The conspirators found means to add to their number Zairac, captain of the palace-guard, who promised them his utmost assistance; and from that moment they looked on themselves as sure of the success of their design.

Zairac

Zairac, without delay, took the most effectual measures to secure all the avenues to the palace, and to prevent any persons from entering there but such as were relations or friends of the conspirators ; but the very day on which the blow was to be struck, whereby the Caliph was to be deprived of his crown, the whole plot was discovered to him by a Mussulman called Taharif, who had overheard all that passed at the last conference held by Munas and his party. He disguised himself in female attire, and found means to slip into the palace, and to get into Caher's apartment. He revealed to him the names of the chief conspirators, and advised him without delay to be on his guard, for that the storm would burst on that very day after evening-prayer ; and that Ali, the son of Balik, would appear the first to seize him.

CAHER.

Hegyra 321.
Ch.ær. 933.

The Caliph
discovers the
plot, and pre-
vents it.

The Caliph, who began already to be apprehensive of some uncommon event by the stir he observed amongst his guards, made no doubt of the truth of Taharif's story ; he therefore directed him instantly to apply to the family of Saïd, to inform them of his dangerous situation, and to order them to send him speedy assistance : he at the same time pointed out a private way, by which the succour might safely come to him, if they took due precaution to avoid the guards who were posted near it.

CAHER.

Hegyra 321.

Ch. ær. 933.

Taharif complied with the Caliph's orders, and all things seemed happily to conspire in his defence. The house of Saïd provided themselves with short weapons which they concealed under their garments, and entered the palace by the way the Caliph had pointed out. That prince placed them in different apartments, and ordered them to remain concealed, until they should receive further orders from him.

So soon as evening-prayer was over, Ali ben Balik went to the palace, and offered to go to the Caliph, but he was denied entrance into his apartment. He began to quarrel with the door-keepers, relying upon being supported, in case of need, by the very guards whose commandant was in the plot; but to his great surprize, some of the Saïd's appeared with arms, who seized him, and placed him in a room, under a proper guard.

The conspirators impatiently waited for news of Ali's enterprize; but they could hear none, except that he had at first been denied admision to the Caliph, and that they had afterwards permitted him to enter.

This account had a different effect upon the conspirators. Moclach imagining the plot was discovered, instantly provided for his own safety, and made his escape. Balik, on the contrary, who did not in the least suspect it, and whose thoughts were turned only on the insult committed on his son,

son, in denying him entrance into the apart-ments, went to the palace to complain of it : he was admitted to the Caliph's presence, and was there apprehended.

CAHER.
Hegyra 321.
Ch. æt. 933.

Upon this Caher immediately sent one of his attendants to Munas, desiring his speedy presence about an affair of importance, in which he wanted his advice. Munas made some difficulty to comply, and with good reason ; but, in all probability, he was ignorant that the Saïds were in possession of the interior part of the palace: however, being earnestly intreated by the messenger, he yielded, and went with him. He crossed the apartments till he came to that of the Caliph ; and so soon as the door was opened, Caher advanced to meet him, and seizing him by the garment, commanded such of the Saïds as were at hand to apprehend him, and keep him close prisoner.

The Caliph then going into another room, commanded that the head of Ali should be instantly brought him in a dish. His commands having been obeyed on the spot, the Caliph took the dish, and entering the room where Balik was guarded, he placed the head of his son on a table near him, and going out told him, that if he did not know whose it was, he would give him a little time to discover it. How shocking a sight must this be to a father? and how fatal a preface to Balik himself? And indeed his fate was soon decided. The Caliph having afforded

CAHER.

Hegyra 321.

Ch. ær. 933.

him a short space to view the head of his dear son, commanded the father's head to be also cut off and placed in the same dish, which he ordered to be brought to him. So soon as this was done, he again took the dish, carried it to the room where Munas was in custody, and set it before him. The eunuch shuddering at so horrid a sight, cried out; "May the curse of God light on the author of such barbarity!" The Caliph did not give him time to say any more; he caused his head to be cut off, and put in the same dish with the two others. On the next day each of the heads was fixed on the point of a lance, and carried through all the streets of Bagdat, preceded by the common cryer, who from time to time said with a loud voice, "Behold the reward of those that have broken their oath made to the Caliph, and who have endeavoured to raise disturbances in the state."

The Caliph's
cruelty to
Abu Ahmet.

These bloody executions being over, Caher entertained not the least fear of any future cabals, and gave a loose to his cruel disposition. He caused the prince to be seized, who, according to common report, was to have supplied his place if the plot had succeeded: it was his own nephew Abu Ahmet, son of the Caliph Moktaphi. He caused him to be brought before him, and having carried him to a place called the Haram, which is the most private part of the Seraglio, he commanded his attendants to seize him, and

and nail him up against one of the partitions CAHER.
with four large nails which he had caused Hegyra 321.
to be made for that purpose. Ch. xx. 933.

Whilst the unhappy Ahmet * was ex- He extorts a
piring, Caher sent for Abu Jahia, a lawyer sum of money
of great repute, and who was deemed to be from Jahia.
very rich. So soon as he appeared, the Caliph told him he stood in great need of the sum of two hundred thousand denarii, and that he must desire him to advance the money forthwith.

Jahia pleading his inability of furnishing so large a sum, the Caliph interrupted him, and said, "How is this? Abu Ahmet, who is in the next room, assured me you were able to lend the money, and is of opinion you should do so: go with me to him," added Caher, taking the lawyer by the hand. It may be easily imagined to how great a degree Jahia was terrified, to see even the Caliph's nephew expiring under so uncommon a punishment. He foresaw that if he continued to refuse a compliance with that prince's demand, he must share the same fate; he therefore promised, that he would strip himself of every thing to make up the sum in question.

* El Makin speaking of Ahmet, only says that he was confined in a room, the door whereof the Caliph caused to be walled up, and in which he suffered that young prince to die of hunger. Kondemir says almost the same thing.

CAHER.

Hegyra 322.

Ch. ær. 934

Moclach forms
a new conspiracy
against
the Caliph.

This was the last barbarous deed the Caliph executed. The vizir Moclach, who had concealed himself ever since the discovery of the last plot, thirsted after a more favourable opportunity of revenging himself on the tyrant; and when he considered the hate and fury which had arisen in the minds of all men on account of the cruel death of Ahmet, he thought a better occasion could not offer.

The nobility and great men of the state also murmured loudly. A general discontent appeared, and nothing but a chief seemed wanting to excite a revolt.

Moclach undertook to carry it into execution: however, he dared not yet make his appearance; but as he was a man full of artifice and cunning, he, though absent, so well managed the design that it was attended with success. He strove to intimidate Sima, commander of the Turkish militia, by causing it to be insinuated to him, that considering the sanguinary disposition of the Caliph, he had reason to fear his own safety. Sima was sensible of the truth of that observation, and conferred on this head with other officers, who were filled with the same apprehensions. They earnestly required, that previous to any attempt a conference should be held with Moclach, who consented, proper security having been first given to him; and after a few conferences, it was agreed that

that Caher should be deposed; which was to be brought about in the following manner: as the pay of the troops was in arrear, the soldiers were to demand the money with loud cries, and without waiting for any answer from court, the officers and soldiers were to ascend to the Caliph's apartment, and drag him thence, in order to put him in prison, after which a successor was to be appointed.

CAHER.

Hegyra 322.

Ch. ær. 934

The event of this plot was successful to the conspirators. The soldiers having made the clamour agreed on, the officers, who only waited for that signal, instantly went to the Caliph's apartment, with some troops. Caher having enquired into the cause of the disturbance, was informed it was a revolt, which he could not possibly guard against, because the conspirators were already in possession of the palace. The Caliph ran with the utmost speed through a gallery which led to a bath; and finding that the conspirators broke open the doors, and searched all the chambers, he found means to get on the roof of the bath, and there concealed himself; but his pursuers fought after him so diligently, that they discovered him.

They got out on the roof and seized him; and whether it was accidentally done in the hurry, or whether the thing had been so resolved, they put out his eyes. He was then carried to prison, whence he was not

Caher is deposed, and reduced to the utmost misery.

CAHER.

Hegyra 322.

Ch. ær. 934.

enlarged till after the election of another Caliph. They appointed for him an apartment in the palace, of which he was soon deprived, without any revenue settled for his maintenance. And in short this wretched prince was reduced to a necessity of begging his bread at the doors of the Mosques. El-Makin cites an author (without naming him) who had seen Caher in that miserable condition: "Being once at Almanzor's mosque," says he, "on a Friday, I saw a man brought thither cloathed in a robe with a double furr, which was much worn, and I heard him say: Remember him who was once your Caliph, and who now begs your charity." A strange revolution, by which that prince was punished for his crimes in a more grievous manner, than if they had deprived him of his life instead of his sight and crown.

He lived thus miserably till the 339th year of the Hegyra, when he died at Bagdat, aged fifty two years, of which he had reigned about eighteen months.

The family of the Buians, or Bouians, so famous in eastern story, was first known during the reign of this Caliph. Those princes were called Buians from Buiah, the head of that house. He was the son of Kaba Khofru, who claimed his descent from the monarchs of the fourth Dynasty of the Persians, who were called Saffanites, from Saffan first prince

prince of that Dynaſty, of which was the famous Choſroës.

CAHER.

Hegyra 323.

Ch. ær. 934.

Although Buiah pretended to be derived from ſo illuſtrious a ſtock, yet he was ſo unprovided of the favours of fortune, that he lived very privately in a village in the country of Dilem, which lies along the ſouthern coaſt of the Caſpian ſea, from whence his poſterity were alſo called Dilemites. Buiah exerciſed the buſineſs of a fiſherman, and paſſed his days with his wife and family in great penury. His wife happening to die, he left the village, and went with his children to the houſe of one of his friends called Schéhériar ebn Roſtam, where he reſided for ſome time.

In this abode Buiah had a very extraordinary dream. He thought he ſaw a great flame iſſue out of his belly, which having in a ſhort time covered a vaſt extent of country, ſuddenly aroſe up to the heavens, and divided itſelf into three parts; and he at the ſame time ſaw the people of the earth fall proſtrate before the three fires, and beg their protection.

Being uneaſy to know the meaning of ſo wonderful a dream, Buiah conſulted an aſtrotologer who paſſed for a very great adept in the interpretation of dreams. The aſtrotologer having muſed a while, ſaid to Buiah, “You have three ſons, who will all become ſovereign princes: their power will be great,
and

CAHER. and spread over the earth in like manner as
 Hegira 323. you saw in your dream."
 Ch. xx. 934.

Buiah, amazed at a prediction which suited so ill with his wretched condition, thought the astrologer had jested with him ; but the latter undeceived him, by continuing his discourse in the following terms : " You may depend on what I say ; and if you can tell me the hour in which your children were severally born, I will likewise inform you of many other particulars." Buiah satisfied him, and at the same time brought his three children before him ; having calculated their nativity, and maturely considered his scheme, he saluted the eldest called Ali, and taking him by the hand, kissed it, and said to his father, " This is he that will be the first monarch." He in like manner saluted the second named Hassan ; and the third called Ahmed, and said to their father, " These two will also have a share in the sovereignty."

The three brothers immediately resolved to take up arms, as the only means of verifying the prediction, and went into the service of Macan, king of the province of Ghilan in Persia. They began to distinguish themselves at the time when Macan having lost a battle against a prince called Asfar, was on a sudden deprived of his dominions by the conqueror. The sons of Buiah instantly abandoned Macan, and took on amongst the

the troops of Asfar; and he having been slain by a Karmathian in the 315th year of the Hegyra, Mardawigius, a prince famous both for his valour and ambition, seized with a strong hand the province of Ghilan, and at the same time made a conquest of Dilem, Mazanderan, and Tabarestan. The sons of Buiah soon made an offer of their swords to that prince, who having heard of their bravery, readily employed them in his army, and speedily advanced them; and they were appointed to superior commands in the expeditions which that prince undertook for the conquest of the provinces of Irak, Fars, and Southern Persia. But Mardawigius having been killed at Ispahan by one of his old slaves, called Jakem the Turk, and leaving no children, Ali, the eldest of the three Buian brothers, who was then at the head of a victorious army, easily made himself master of Persia: these were the first steps which enabled those brothers to found that famous Dynasty, so well known in history by the name of the Buian Dynasty. It was at first divided into three branches, and afterwards became only two, the princes whereof, for the most part, reigned jointly at the same time.

Those three princes are commonly known only by the surnames which were given to them. Ali was called Amadeddulat; Hafsán, Rokneddulat; and Ahmed, Moëzeddulat.

CAHER.
Hegyra 323.
Ch. 22. 934.

CAHER.

dulat. They were all great favourers of the
Hegyra 323. sect of Ali, probably because the first so-
Ch. 27. 934- vereign of their family was called Ali. We
shall soon see them extend their power even
to Bagdat, and despotically govern both the
person and empire of the Caliphs, to whom
they left only the bare shew of authority.

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